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SOUTHERN MIDDLE EARTH

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The Realm of Bellakar (supplement)

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NEXT ISSUE:
EVIL
RACES

EDITORIAL: *"Khârumagînad"*

Today, *Other Hands* turns 30. To celebrate this threshold, I decided that, as at Bilbo's eleventy-first, something quite exceptional must be planned for the autumn. And here it is: a double issue so fat that we had to split it up into two separate booklets, along with some amazing new maps to feast your eyes upon.

The dominant theme of the materials submitted for this issue also gave me an excuse to make the dedication which heads this editorial. *Khârumagînad* is Adûnaic and may be translated as "to those who have made the South." By this I wish to recognize the collective achievement of those MERP authors who blazed the first trails into the unexplored South of Middle-earth, laying a foundation for future subcreators to build upon.

Many who read *The Lord of the Rings* desire to follow Aragorn on his travels "into the far countries of Rhun and Harad where the stars are strange (FotR.261)." MERP never really made it to the East, apart from Pete Fenlon's map of Endor and scattered ideas dropped in the "Lords of Middle-earth" sourcebooks. The South, on the other hand, has received ample attention from Day One and has produced no less than ten supplements. The scorching deserts and dark jungles of Haradwaith, lands inhabited by bronze-clad Southrons, bellowing *mûmakil* and "black men like half-trolls with white eyes and red tongues (RotK.121)," have held an enduring fascination for Middle-earth aficionados.

But the magnetism of these things lies not merely in their exoticism. A deeper attraction and a more nuanced vantage point finds expression in Sam's reaction to the dying Southron in Ithilien:

> It was Sam's first view of a battle of Men against Men, and he did not like it much. He was glad that he could not see the dead face. He wondered what the man's name was and where he came from; and if he was really evil of heart, or what lies or threats had led him on the long march from his home; and if he would not really rather have stayed there in peace (TT.269)

While it is clear that Tolkien regarded the Southlands as "enemy-occupied" territory under the thumb of the Dark Lord or his minions (Letters.280), it does not follow that (had he turned his world-building efforts in that direction) he would have treated the South or its peoples *homogeneously*. One has only to compare Tolkien's blanket statements in *Akallabêth* about the Men of Middle-earth who "had taken the friends of Morgoth to be their masters (Sil.260)" with his richly variegated description of the pre-Númenórean peoples of Anfalas in the story of Tal-Elmar (HoMe XII.422-438). Good or evil, the peoples of the South are at least as interesting, complex and different from one another as those of the Westlands.

This premise lies at the heart of every true explorer of southern Middle-earth, and it is reflected in all of the contributions dealing with the South that appear in this issue. Of course, one subcreator's imaginings of what the South should be like will differ from another's, so absolute uniformity is neither practical nor in the end desirable. But as with all things published in the pages of this magazine, the emphasis is always on maintaining, where possible, continuity with the MERP series and fidelity to Tolkien.

But to introduce the pieces in their proper order...

Some time ago I proposed starting up a new column dealing with specific aspects of magic (rather than umbrella treatments of the subject, as have predominated in past issues). First time OH contributor Andy Mack has kindly availed himself of this suggestion by offering guidelines on how to apply the concept of Words of Command to your MERP games. I hope that others will follow Andy's example with other magic-related topics so that we can keep this column as a regular feature.

Aragorn's boast to have traveled so far east and south that the stars themselves became "strange" implies a larger land-mass for Endor than is allowed by Pete Fenlon's continent map. To remedy this, our resident cartographer Thomas Morwinsky has devised an expanded layout for Middle-earth by combining Pete's map with those used for the role playing world of Hârn. For the South, Thomas' scheme allows us to transform the empty ocean south of the MERP map into one of the "Inner Seas" Tolkien says the Númenóreans voyaged across.

Back in April when this was still going to be just a single issue, Christian Haas' essay on the Mûmakanril (the inhabitants of the land where oliphaunts come from) was to be our feature article. It is a highly original and in-depth background piece on this prominent but underdescribed culture of the Southlands. In the process of invention, Christian has formulated some principles for making the names given in the early MERP modules for this region look more exotic and less Eldarin. Some of the cultural and geographic details were arrived at through collaboration with Thomas Morwinsky, who is working on his own expansion of the regions covered by the now legendary *Court of Ardor* module.

Cory Rushton, also a first-time contributor (and veteran MERPlister), has written a short piece on a religious order of the South, complete with NPC creation guidelines — for all three of ICE's core rule systems, thanks to a little help from Sam Daish. The background of this order has been worked into the Bellakar history (see below) with an interesting new take on Tolkien's story of Queen Berúthiel.

In line with our southern theme, I chose to focus this issue's Mithril centerfold on some of the more interesting figures Chris Tubb designed to support the *Far Harad* module. Ever wondered what the Razarac figure looks like? Here's your chance to find out!

And then there is Bellakar, the monster that grew too big for its cage. While others spend their time lamenting the blank spaces on Pete Fenlon's continent map, Eric Dubourg is actually doing something about it. A long-standing subscriber and contributor to OH, Eric has taken on the challenge of creating an entirely new realm of Middle-earth. His subject is the hitherto empty desert coasts and hinterland between Umbar and Bozisha-Miraz (the realm described in *Far Harad)*. Eric has given life to those wastelands, conceiving the epic saga of a league of Númenórean colonies that weathers the vicissitudes of history, evolving into a major power in the Third Age.

In *Akallabêth*, Tolkien wrote of the Númenóreans of the Southlands that "the lordships and strongholds they made have left many rumours in the legends of Men (Sil.267)." A tantalizing invitation to subcreators, one would think; oddly, though, for the most part the MERP series has ignored or marginalized the Númenórean legacy as an active ingredient in the cultural makeup of the South during the Third Age—tragically, in my opinion, since that legacy offers so rich a fund of themes for story-telling. With Bellakar, though, Eric has restored this blind spot to its proper prominence.

I should say "Eric, Wes Frank and myself," since Wes and I both found ourselves irresistibly drawn into Eric's project. As some of you may know, Wes has been working on a realm module for Near Harad for a number of years now. Haradwaith is Wes' ballpark, and Bellakar has benefited greatly from his long meditation on this region. And, of course, I would make sure that Bellakar overflows with good Adûnaic, thanks to the ever present linguistic expertise of David Salo.

The one problem with our history of Bellakar (to borrow Tolkien's ironic quip about LotR) is that it is too short. Its story remains unfinished. Due to limitations of time and page-space, we soon realized there was no way to bring the tale adequately to the end of the Third Age or beyond—at least not within the covers of OH; Eric and Wes are carrying on the work as we speak, and we will one day hopefully see a complete realm module: history, gazetteer, layouts and all. The moral of the story is that there is enough potential in the foundations laid by the kbarumagtn to fill volumes. Virtually every turn in Middle-earth's history bristles with possibilities for adventuring, whether one prefers trekking, politicking, exploring or just experiencing a strange, new realm of the imagination.

It's been a fun ride these past seven years. I look forward to another thirty great issues of OH!

Chris Seeman
29 July, 2000

KHÂRUMAGÎN

Terry K. Amthor
The Court of Ardor (1983)

John Crowdis
Hazards of the Harad Wood (1990)

Charles Crutchfield
Far Harad (1988)
Forest of Tears (1989)
Warlords of the Desert (1989)

Peter C. Fenlon
Lords of Middle-earth II (1987)
Shadow in the South (1988)

Brenda Gates Spielman
Umbar: Haven of the Corsairs (1982)

Robert J. McCarter
Nazgûl's Citadel (1991)

Gary D. McClellan
Nazgûl's Citadel (1991)

Chris Stone
Shadow in the South (1988)

William E. Wilson
Greater Harad (1990)
Nazgûl's Citadel (1991)

WORDS OF COMMAND

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The following is not "another treatise on magic" but rather the thoughts of a simple English GM very much inspired by Dirk Brandherm's and Martin Burkes magic articles in OH 10/11 and OH27. Whilst I enjoy using the MERP system, like everyone (I presume) I have my own house rules, leaving what I like and changing what I don't. The demise of MERP has speeded up this process, and this article is its first real fruit.

Whilst I am on the whole happy with the MERP magic system, the idea of Words of Command (WCs) appeals to me; and after avidly rereading *The Lord of the Rings* for the umpteenth time, I think I would categorize WCs according to one of four types:[1]

Word of Forbidding (WF): prevents egress through a portal (e.g., Gandalf's attempt to seal the Chamber of Marzarbul against the Balrog). A WF is not limited to locking a door. It is equally capable of blocking an open passageway or cave tunnel, so that even if the door were vaporized (as can be done with some spells), exit would be impossible so long as the WF was in place. [Realm: Essence]

Word of Passage (WP): opens a portal that has been magically sealed against the caster (e.g., the Balrog in Moria or the Witch-king at the gates of Minas Tirith). [Realm: Essence]

Word of Repelling (WR): a short phrase designed to repel the servants of Sauron (e.g., Frodo at Weathertop, who calls upon Elbereth when faced by the Lord of the Nazgûl). [Realm: Channelling]

Word of Breaking (WB): destroys a physical object (e.g., Gandalf breaking the Bridge of Khazad-dûm to prevent the Balrog's pursuit). [Realm: Essence or Channelling]

There you are: sweeping generalizations; but, as I said, I am not a scholar but GM. I then poured myself a pot of coffee and added *Spell Law* and Robert Foster's *Complete Guide to Middle-earth* to my reading list, in the end coming up with several working principles:

1. A WC is an arcane process whereby the command functions as a higher level spell than normally castable by the Essence or Channelling realm-user.
2. A WC can **only** be broken by arcane means (in this case, only by other WCs) or by the expiration of the opposing WCs duration.
3. Language **is** important. Before the gates of Moria, Gandalf says: "I once knew every spell in all the tongues of Elves or Men or Orcs, that was ever used for such a purpose (FotR.320)." Since the language in which the WC is spoken affects its strength, the caster must decide which language to speak it in. The caster **must** be fluent in that language.
4. The effect of a WC on its caster is severe and not something to be considered lightly.
5. A WC is usually not more than three words, normally only one.
6. It can be argued there are two categories of WCs: Major and Minor. Plainly the words Gandalf used to open the gates of Moria were less draining on him than those used to seal the chamber of Marzarbul. For ease, most of this article will deal with Words Major.

HOW TO CAST A WC

To cast a WC, the player rolls on the Base Spell Attack Table, taking 1 round to cast with no penalty due to lack of preparation. This roll determines only whether the WC succeeds or fails, otherwise the result is unimportant. The PP cost for casting **any** WC = the level of the caster, **not** the level of the WC (e.g., a 2nd level caster would use 2 PP to cast a WC).

LANGUAGE MODIFIERS

In relation to languages and bearing in mind Martin's article, I then made what may seem to some an arbitrary decision. By their very nature WCs are probably what could be termed "higher mysteries;" so I decided that only in five languages could they be spoken. Representing the Mannish cultures would be the speech of the Dúnedain (Adûnaic), Sindarin and Quenya would represent the Eldarin kindred, Orkish would represent the Yrch, and finally there would be the Black Speech.

I decided to assign ranks to each language appropriate to the level of fluency needed to pronounce WCs. It seemed fairly obvious that some fluency in the language would be necessary, so a spell caster would need to be able to speak the chosen tongue at at least Rank 3. Since I judged Quenya to be a more "potent" language when it came to magic, it would require Rank 4, whereas Black Speech, since it was "based to some extent on Quenya and perhaps a perversion of that language (Foster.64)," would only require Rank 3.

Language defines the strength of WCs as follows:

Orkish	2 x level of caster
Adûnaic	3 x level of caster
Sindarin	4 x level of caster
Black Speech	4 x level of caster
Quenya	5 x level of caster

Example: *A WC cast in Orkish by a 2nd level caster functions at 4th level, in Adûnaic at 6th level, etc.*

SPECIAL RULES

WFs: This warding will last for 1 hour/2 levels of the WF (e.g., a 6th level WF would last 3 hours before being dispelled). Breaking a WF is not without danger, as this could lead to the entire passageway/portal collapsing. If broken by a WP, the chance of structural collapse = WP level x 3% (e.g., a successful 10th level WP has a 30% chance of collapse).

WPs: The caster multiplies his or her level by the language of the word with the following modifications: Orkish (+ 1 level),

Black Speech (+ 2 levels). If a WP attacks a WF, consult the RR table. If the WP is successful, it will reduce the level of the WF by 50% (e.g., a 6th level ward would be reduced to a 3rd level ward). Even if unsuccessful, the WP will still reduce the WF by 2 levels (e.g., 6th level ward reduced to 4th level). If the language used were Black Speech, this reduction would be 3 levels. (Whereas Ouenya is more potent, Black Speech is more destructive.)

WRs: There are no Orkish or Black Speech WRs. (After all, the Free Peoples need a break some time.) If used to repel un-dead, a successful RR forces the undead to retreat for rounds equal to the caster's level, become stunned and unable to parry for likewise for rounds equal to the casters level. If the RR is unsuccessful, the un-dead will not retreat, but for 1 round they will only be able to parry and be at a penally of -50 to activity. **WBs:** Due to the power unleashed, the only way to cast a WB is by directly channeling much of the caster's own power through a spell multiplier. This is not something a caster would willingly do, but if a Balrog faces you and it is the only way to save your butt from the fire (literally), I think it might be considered! The spell multiplier is normally a staff, which may well break from the strain. The base chance of this happening = WB level x 3%. Language modifiers are the same as for WPs. WBs can also be used to break physical objects. (The GM assigns an RR strength to the object.) Success destroys the object. Just make sure you're tied to a rope if on the bridge!!

EFFECTS ON CASTER

Quite vicious, I'm afraid. Immediately upon casting WFs or WBs, or after WRs or WPs have been successful, the caster's Co is reduced by 50% (ensure you make the necessary adjustment to the character's sheet immediately). After the first 10 minutes, Co begins to recover at 1/minute, but during those 10 minutes they are too weak to do much more than stagger along. (No spells may be cast. If forced to fight, they do so at -50 to activity.) Until the caster's Co score returns to 75% of normal, no spell higher than 2nd level can be attempted.

WORDS MINOR

These fall into the same categories as Words Major but take longer to create. PP cost is the same as Words Major (caster's level = number of PPs used). Think of a Word Major like going to certain fast food outlets: it's quick (supposedly), costs little, but you suffer the effects for some time after. A Word Minor is like a meal at a good restaurant: you take more time, your pocket may suffer more, but the indigestion is far less! All Words Minor double the level of the WC (e.g., a 2nd level caster could cast a 4th level Word Minor) with the following language modifiers:

Adûnaic	+ 1	level
Sindarin	+2	levels
Black Speech	+2	levels
Quenya	+3	levels

It is possible to use a Word Minor to break a Word Major, but unless it is, say, Ouenya attacking Orkish, the chance of success is low. A caster may enhance or "power up" the Word Minor by adding PP to it (+1 PP = +1 level), but this takes time. For each PP used, 10 minutes of game time pass. The effects on the caster are also far less. Apart from the PP expenditure, the caster only looses 10 Co/10 minutes (which are recovered at the same rate). This simulates the taxing effect of such work.

Example: *A party of the Free Peoples stands before the gates of an aban-*

doned fortress. They have been searching for an artifact of power to use against Angmar (in actual fact they intent to strip the place bare, but what the hell). The only barrier to their entry is a 10th level WF. The party contains Mirwen, a Dúnadan Mage. She ponders the matter and decides that, because she does not know what is inside, she will attempt a minor WP. If she cast such a word, it would be a 5th level WP - not strong enough, so she decides to ponder the matter for 1 hour, raising the Word Minor to 11th level, giving her a 50% chance of success. Whispering a silent prayer to Elbereth, she traces the sigil of opening before her and utters the word. At first nothing seems to happen. Then, suddenly, the door begins to open before them and the party enters the portal Little do they know that at present Adûnaphel is also in residence...

PERMANENT WCs

Incidents in LotR involving the gates of Moria, Minas Tirith and Erebor offer examples of WCs whose effects extend beyond the time limits proposed above. In a game, such effects can be achieved through one of two types of sacrifice: blood sacrifice carried out by servants of the Shadow or self-sacrifice by the Free Peoples. In the latter case, this means that someone must permanently give up part of their own life-force to power the word. Needless to say, this would only be effective really with WFs and perhaps WRs. If a WP were cast against an WF used in this way, it would only temperately negate the enchantment and the portal would then reseal itself. Another effect of such permanency on a WF is the chance of collapse would also be negated. After all, what is the point of expending one's life force only to find a couple of days later the doorway covered by a fall-in!!

So those are my thoughts on the matter.[2] It probably has more holes in it than Ar-Pharazon's fleet and undoubtedly certain people will tear their hair out and I'll warn the post office to look out for letter bombs! That not withstanding, I do not claim to be anything more than a GM who tries to challenge his players. If I can help others, so be it. All I can say is the replies could be "interesting!"

NOTES

1. It could be argued there is a fifth category of WC, namely a Word of Despair "Then the Black captain rose in his stirrups and cried aloud in a dreadful voice speaking in some forgot ten tongue words of power and terror to rend both heart and stone (RotK. 102)."
2. One thing I have not addressed is how many words a caster is capable of mastering. To be honest, I think it is up to the GM. A possible system, however, might be that normally, whilst casters might know WCs in their own native tongue, they might be unable to cast words in others (but that need not stop casters from looking for them).

AN ALTERNATIVE CONTINENTAL MAP FOR MERP

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This article is designed to accompany two alternative continental maps for MERP. Both are drawn from the same sources, but have different focuses. They were both created by combining large portions of Columbia Games' Hârn World *map supplements with Pete Fenlon's continent map of Endor. I want to especially thank Columbia Games for giving permission to re-use their original work for this project.*

A note on cartography at a continental scale

When considering this new continent please keep in mind that cartography for a spherical body (e.g., a planet) always faces three basic demands: to remain true to angles, areas and distances. Unfortunately all these requirements can only be met on a globe. A level map cannot meet all of them because a globe cannot be projected onto a two-dimensional plane without distortions. Accordingly a map must be made for one purpose (e.g. true to angles for sea-navigation) and then violates the other demands (one might only think of a Mercator-projection, where Greenland seems as big as Latin America).

For the Second Age this real-world phenomenon poses no problem as Arda still is a flat disc (Hence the presented map meets all three requirements). After it is remade as a globe following Numenor's fall, we face the above-mentioned real-world cartographer's problems. In my map I assume that all degrees of longitude have the same distance to one another (thereby preventing the distortion observed in the Mercator-projection). Consequently this leads to a cylindrical world without poles when we wrap the two-dimensional map, but in my opinion this deficit can be accepted because of the ease of use we get with this map.

When you do need cartographic data for the polar regions I propose to compare the regions on the Endor map with our real world's globe and apply the corresponding distances to the Middle-earth map. Hopefully your players aren't going to ask you questions about the cartographic inconsistencies (distances etc.) when comparing the Endor map with their travelling experiences. At least we haven't got GPS and satellites in Endor and accordingly the discrepancies in high latitudes (as the polar regions) won't be perceived by your average PC...

ICE's continental map of Endor always had one major shortcoming in my opinion: the landmass shown is too small. Even if continental shapes would (and should) differ between Middle-earth and our world, the scale should be roughly the same. If we take Tolkien's statement seriously that his Middle-earth should represent our world in millennia past, then the ICE continent does not match the criterion of being even roughly the size of Eurasia. The following table illustrates some exemplary data:

Criterion	Distance East-West at c. 45°N latitude
Eurasia	c. 12.900 km
ICE continent	c. 6.800 km
new continent	c. 11.200 km

One can clearly see that ICE's continent is heavily outmatched by Eurasia (the landmass most likely to represent Middle-earth). In contrast the north-south range of the ICE continent seems quite reasonable.

My solution to the problem lies in the enlargement of the existing map. Areas already described in ICE modules aren't changed, so consistency on this matter is ensured. To create the new map, I cut the ICE continent in two, dividing the two parts a little east of the Talathrant (the great river in central ME) straight from North to South. Into the gap of the resulting parts I inserted a landmass that puts the E-W extent of ME roughly in line with that of Eurasia (see table above).

Because the ICE continent doesn't reach the equator (given that Hobbiton lies at c. 52° northern latitude and Arda is the same size of Terra) I also added a southern continent (Morinórë) that should compensate the imbalance in landmass between North and South at least a bit.[1] This addition also led to the creation of some Inner Seas, as described by Tolkien: "...and they [the Númenóreans] came even into the inner seas, and sailed about Middle-earth... (Sil.263)."

This opens the opportunity to create such seas (as done on the new map) as well as the possibility that Middle-earth could be rounded completely by a ship; the above quote implies that the northern shores of Endor were (at least during summer) navigable for ocean-going ships.

Returning to the map, the Bay of Ormal in particular is now transformed into the biggest of the above mentioned Inner Seas. These added parts of Middle-earth were largely taken from the continent Lythia in Columbia Games' Hârn World RPG supplement series. The result of this work is the full-color map provided with this issue.

The second (B/W) map attempts to achieve two goals: 1) to introduce the island of Hârn into the ME-setting (and thereby enabling the use of the high-quality HârnWorld supplements in ME) and 2) to create a Bay of Illuin similar in extent to the Bay of Ormal. If we assume the Bay of Ormal to be created when the great southern light of the Valar fell, then the fall of Illuin in the North should be a catastrophe of similar consequences for the region. Now, my expanded map (see above) does not provide such a bay (at least not of the appropriate extent).

The solution to both these topics is depicted in the B/W map. Here we have two great bays of roughly similar size that mark the places where the two lights once crushed whole lands in their fall. By chance and favorable geography, the highland of later Hârn was not destroyed but separated from the main continent when the surrounding lowlands sank beneath the new seas in the wake of the destruction -wrought. So the seemingly artificial integration of the Hârnic isle into the smooth map is a product of the "secondary world" of Tolkien — the Valar and their great enemy.

When using the Hârn setting in Middle-earth you have to remember that, though all names and other sub-creative aspects have been very carefully considered and developed by Columbia Games' authors, these names were not intended to be Tolkienian. This should not present such a big problem since

Hârn is set in a region far from the west and the local languages and customs are wholly on the GM's decision without conflicting with Tolkienian canonical sources.[2] You may wish, however, to throw a few Númenórean or Elven words in to show the remaining fragments of Dúnadan lore (see below).

According to your own taste, you may use either or neither of these maps. If using the second one (with Hârn), I propose to consider some differences between the original Hârn setting and Middle-earth. The following points are only useful for people who know (and own) HârnWorld products; others may skip them. In fact, for all those who do not know or own Hârn products I would propose using the color map, since without the accompanying products this island may seem not too useful (unless you want to populate it -with your own cultures).

- Though lying at a rather high latitude, Hârn has a climate similar to Arthedain (e.g., cool temperate to cold temperate). This stems from abundant subsurface volcanic activity (remnants of Illuin's fall) which produces a little warming of the sea (relatively speaking), its effect perhaps a bit comparable to the Gulfstream in our world which lends Norway a rather mild climate (considering its latitude).
- The ten HârnWorld gods are non-existent.[3] Their (alleged) servants can be Ainur still dwelling in Middle-earth. The "god" Ilvir in Araka-Kalai may be one such Ainu. All priestly powers should be modified to (preferably) psionics or secular spells. Since the involvement of the gods is so subtle in Hârn, their removal should not have a great impact on the overall design. The belief of their followers persist of course, just as described in the various publications.
- The Godstones do not teleport due to the problems of teleportation in Tolkien's world (if you really want to keep the teleports, I suggest to make them strictly limited to live intelligent beings, e.g. no items, even not ones with Aura). Preferably they are just mysterious stones of unknown powers. GMs may take their pick here or discard them altogether.
- The Elves do not leave Ulfshafen for the Blessed Realm, but they rather fade and become Lingerers (a not uncommon occurrence for Third Age Avari).
- The kingdoms and cultures of Hârn persist as described in their original modules.
- The man responsible for the stabilization of Hârn during the Migration Wars (when Melderyn was in serious crisis) should be one of the Blue Wizards.
- The reason for the magical concentration in Hârn (e.g., a relative high number chantries) is the presence of the remnants of Illuin.
- Emelrene as well as the realms on the northwestern shore of Lythia (Harbaal, Shorkyne, Emelrene) persist as well. Emelrene remains an ally of Melderyn.
- Hârn and Emelrene remain a backwater and relatively unscathed by Sauronic activity[5] due to their remote location and natural barriers/defenses. The Chey's main ambitions look southeastwards to win the lands south of the central mountains (and with them access to eastern Endor).
- The following topics cover key events in Hârn's history. Some alterations have to be made to the Hârn timeline to fit it into Middle-earth.
    - The Earthmasters lived during the years before the rise of the sun in Hârn and might be changed into (lesser) Ainur that once dwelled in corporeal form in Middle-earth (e.g. like Tom Bombadil and Goldberry). The Earthmaster structures in Hârn are buildings erected by these Ainur (for whatever reasons). Please remember that the Ainur wishing to interact with the physical world need bodies that have similar needs as those of Elves and Men. So the idea of an Ainu origin for the structures seems not too unlikely (even the Valar in Valinor had "houses"). These Ainur left the isle long ago (apart from those at Araka-Kalai). The structures of unknown origin at Earthmaster sites (cf. *Hârnworld)* built when strange beings roamed the island between the departure of the Earthmasters and the arrival of the Elves) may be transformed into Earthmaster structures as well, or these unknown creatures might be renegade Ainur (hence the strange and often hostile "feel" of these people). Before the Elves reached Hârn these beings vanished too.
    - Avarin Elves settle Hârn since c. 1A 250 (Siem might be changed to a local lesser Ainu guiding the Elves, or you can omit him altogether). These Avari do not fully understand the structures of the Earthmasters. The first Dwarves, eager for accumulation of wealth, first appear in Hârn c. S A 800 (coming by ship through the Emelrene-Melderyn area). They settle mainly in Kiraz and Azadmere.
    - Harn's first mannish visitors are faithful Númenóreans in the Second Age (since c. SA 1600). They build several structures (the Henge sites) for unknown reasons (mostly curiosity and interest in magical power lying here). They depart in c. SA 2600 when they have discovered everything of note (or so they thought). The few remaining preserve the old knowledge upon whose fragmented legacy Melderyn is founded.[4] The above mentioned fact that the Númenórean seafarers completely rounded Middle-earth (including a northern passage) could be credited for the Númenóreans presence on the rather inaccessible island Hârn. The Jarin first come to Hârn in SA 3161. The Barbarian invasions begin in c. TA 120.
    - Battle of Sorrows TA 237.
    - Founding of Melderyn TA 920 (to adapt the Hârnic campaign time to the standard MERP TA 1640). Lothrim discovers Gargun (Orcs) hidden in deep chambers (perhaps in a magical stasis) below Hârn and brings them to the surface (where they have not existed before) around TA 1030. The Hârnic Gargun have to be changed to Tolkienian Orcs though (or you might keep the Gargun as a rather weird Orkish experiment of Morgoth).

If you have any questions or suggestions on these maps, please feel free to contact me. I strongly advise to have at least a look at the Hârn products, since their superior quality and "feel" make them perfect for use in Middle-earth (even if not in the West, which would be difficult indeed).

NOTES

1. Like some kind of "mini-Africa." There may be more continents on the southern hemisphere of course (like "Australia" or "Latin America"). See also OH 4.5-10 for the idea of a campaign in an "Australian" Númenórean colony.
2. As in the original Hârn setting, the island should be a backwater, lagging behind the rest of the world (a situation fostered by Melderyn of course).
3. Though some of their aspects may resemble some peculiarities of the Valar.
4. The Dúnadan "religious" teachings about the Valar should be lost (allowing the Hârnic gods to evolve) or at least severely fragmentary.
5. At least in the mid-Third Age. Since all Hârn products do not provide historical data beyond 720 TR (TA 1640), GMs have great freedom to develop their own local history.

THE MÛMAKANRIL

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The Mûmakanril (sing. Mûmakanar) are a barbaric tribal people of Swertings in the Far Sunlands of the Utter South of Middle-earth. Warlike jungle and savanna-dwellers, known especially for their (to them holy) war-elephants (mûmakil; *sing,* mûmak) *and their worship of the Dark Lord, whom they call Mûdhala. In the Second Age, Indûr Dawndeath united these tribes into the kingdom of Mûmakan. At the end of the Third Age, the Mûmakanril ruled the entire Sunlands, apart from Tantûrak, the Ivory Peninsula and most of the Southern Archipelago.*

This account of the land of Mûmakan derives from the Parma Hyarmenórion *written by Haerangil of Pelargir, a Dúnadan who traveled the Harad in the Third Age, visiting the Utter South during the zenith of Mûmakanda power. Being a learned sage, Haerangil used the ancient terms for the two regions called by the indigenous Black Númenóreans Khâradûnê (Hyarnúmentë, the Southern Heat) and Ûrêzâin (the Far Sunlands), and mentions Ugruzâyan (the southern continent beyond the Inner Sea). Haerangil left Gondor as a very young man around TA 2970 and probably returned at the beginning of the Fourth Age. The* Parma Hyarmenórion *was perhaps written during the years FA 10-20.*

PHYSICAL CHARACTER

Build: The Mûmakanril are among the tallest of the Swertings. They are very athletic and robust. The average weight for men is 243 lbs, for women 170 lbs.

Coloring: Mûmakanril have dark black skin and black hair.

Endurance: Considerable. Mûmakanda warriors can run mile after mile without getting exhausted.

Height: men 6'6", women 6'.

Lifespan: Short (40-60 years). Resistance: +10 bonus against heat/fire attacks; -10 against cold/ice attacks.

Special Abilities: None.

CULTURE

Clothing & Decoration: Mûmakanril like to wear leopard and lion-skins. (The skin must always come from an animal killed directly by the wearer.) In general, the Mûmakanril consider too many clothes unpractical for the wilderness. In all cases — men as well as women—they like to wear many amulets and charms, which often are said to have magical qualities. Mûmakanril have also a definite liking for gold and bronze jewelry.

Fears & Inabilities: Mûmakanril fear spirits of the dead and most sorts of sorcery.

Lifestyle: The Mûmakanril are ruled by a caste of holy warriors (the *sôramril*) and by tribal priests (the *mûmathûmril*). Every Mûmakanar has a place in the tribal community; roles vacated by the death or status elevation of their former occupant are properly filled by others.

Marriage Pattern: Customs differ. Among some tribes, women have no rights and may be given as gifts, sold or even "lent out" by their husbands. In other tribes, men and women cohabit by mutual choice for a time without strong ties. (In such tribes, women might attain positions of great power.) Children grow up in separated groups.

Religion: The Mûmakanril worship a great number of gods and spirits. Besides the *ûmala* (gods corresponding to the Valar and Maiar), spirits of mighty warriors, great chieftains and wise priests are also worshipped. The mightiest deities are Amâv (tribal demigod of Mûmakan), Mûdhala (god of darkness), Kadû-baka (god of death), Lakabah (god of the great jungles), Akava (god of water) and, of course, Makûma (god of the underworld and destroyer of Men). Tribal religion is controlled by a priestly caste, the *mûmathûmril,* which oversees rituals, conjures living corpses and performs sometimes bloody sacrifices.

OTHER FACTORS

Demeanor: Cool and vigilant, but sometimes surprisingly wild or joyful; warlike and keen for singing; living by a strong code of honor based on valor and tests of courage.

Language: Mûmakanda (5), Kîranaic (4) and Hathoric (4). Far-traveled tribesfolk are also able to speak Ganic (4). Later on in life, Ty-Aric (3), Mûlambûrenda (3), Sârenda (2) or Tuktanaic (2) might be learned.

Prejudices: Because of their superstitious demeanor, the Mûmakanril fear Elves and Chaialla. They hate Black Númenóreans. Very often there are terrible feuds between the different tribes.

Restrictions on Professions: No Wizards; Bards (*rathamûril*) are rare.

OUTFITTING OPTIONS

Weapons: dagger, scimitar, spear, club, mace, fighting staff (RMSS: blowpipe, boomerang, harpoon, fishing spear).

Armor: None, or leather.

Clothing: Loincloth or similar covering made of lion or leopard-skin, fixed over one shoulder; head-covering made from an animal head; *mûmathûmril* wear masks made of wood or animal skulls; no footwear except light leather sandals; amulets, rings (for arms, neck, ears and nose); body paint.

BACKGROUND OPTIONS

Special Abilities: 91-95 replace with secret Mûratha drum-language.

Special Items: Mainly religious artifacts, crafted by *mûmathûmril* (shrunken heads, amulets, weapons, magic stones, bottles, arm-rings, animal masks); Essence magic is rare.

Additional Money: Arm or neck-rings of gold; skins from wild animals; herbs or poisons.

Hobbies: *Main Skills*: Maneuvers Without Armor, Staff Weapons, Thrown/Missile Weapons, Riding, Tracking, Magic Abilities, Ambushing, Sneaking/Stealth, Disarm Traps, Perception, Spell Lists; *Additional Skills*: Food Gathering, Sky Lore, Rowing, Beastmastery, Cave Lore, Acrobatics; *Artistic Skills*: Drumming, Storytelling, Singing; *Athletic Skills*: Running, Jumping; *Crafting Skills*: Bone-carving, Leatherwork, Arrow-making; *Influence Skills*: Estimating; *Lore Skills*: Animal Lore, Dark Cults, Plant Lore, Ûmala Lore.

Increasing Skills: All skills may be increased.

Additional Languages: Kinnji (2), Tantûrakian (2), Adûnaic (3) or Usyti (3).

LAND AND PEOPLE

The vast elevated plain of central Mûmakan is a savanna, the outskirts of which are punctuated by irregular rocky hills. The northern half of the plain is dominated by the Kann-Shamûrda, a collection of vast lakes. The Mûmakanda uplands descend into small coastal plains covered with dense tropical rainforest. The climate of the whole region is subtropical and dry, making it a suitable home for lions, leopards, jackals, rhinos, giraffes, zebras, antelopes and, of course, the huge *mûmakil* from which the land derives its name.

Twelve tribes make up the Mûmakanril, each of which consists of a number of clans. The twelve tribes are further grouped according to the kind of environment they typically live in (which leads to shared life-ways and a strong feeling of unity). The largest and most traditional tribal grouping are the **Zamaril,** semi-nomadic savanna-dwellers. The second group, the **Krâlakril,** live in or near the borders of the rainforests. Though fewer than the Zamaril, the Krâlakril live in more populous settlements, supported by great numbers of slaves who cultivate food as well as cash crops (e.g., tobacco and fruit) for the warrior class. The third group of tribes are the **Sîril,** who live near the coasts. A bit more civilized than their kinsfolk, the Sîril often act as traders with neighboring peoples, though most live by fishing and hunting.

AKRILGANAK

Tribal Group: Kralakril.

Region of Origin: eastern hill-country of Mûmakan.

Present Territory: Sekâk and the neighboring islands east of the Ivory Peninsula.

Leader: Môrav (high chieftain).

AKÛNZAMA

Tribal Group: Zamaril.

Region of Origin: southern savannas of Mûmakan.

Present Territory: E-Soriil Sâre from the original Saric capital Jenna-Lakh.

Leader: Abushan (high chieftain).

BATANI

Tribal Group: Zamaril.

Region of Origin: Mîmakai hills.

Present Territory: Hathor and the Mûlambûr. Their original capital was Batamak, but they rule their provinces from Tanith, the former Hathorian capital.

Leader: Morbata (high chieftain).

MADARA

Tribal Group: Zamaril.

Region of Origin: western frontiers of Mûmakan.

Present Territory: Kîranai-lâr and the border regions of Tâliran. Their capital is the fortress of Mamûri. They are warlike followers of Mûbadar and have always been the arch-enemies of the Kîranai.

Leader: Kamak (war champion). Their former chieftain died during the Mûmakanda conquest of the Sunlands (TA 2906-2937).

MÂRANI

Tribal Group: Kralakril.

Region of Origin: Originally the mightiest tribe of Mûmakan and fanatical followers of Hagama, the Mârani were the leaders of the Krâlakril group and their highest chieftain was the accepted as king of the Sîril and Zamaril tribes, which the Mârani ruled from their fortress-capital of Mûmarak. When Jí Indûr came to the Mûmakan as the reincarnated Amâv, he gained control of the Mûdhalasôram and made them the leading tribe. The Mârani never fully accepted the loss of their former power, and their rivalry with the Mûdhalasôram led to the War of Heretics (TA 500-1200). The Mârani were never able to regain their old position.

Present Territory: the islands of Llikh and the neighboring Sealands.

Leader: Shandamal (high chieftain)

MÛDHALASÔRAM

Tribal Group: originally Zamaril, but during the Second Age they rose to power among the tribes and became the most trustworthy servants of Mûdhala and Jí Amâv (Indûr).

Region of Origin: the Kann-Shamurda plateau.

Present Territory: Gan and Tuktan. Their capital (and that of all Mûmakan) is the holy city of Amarû.

Leaders: Shidûr and Ûkan (kings, the two highest warlords of Jí Amâv).

NÛLAKANA

Tribal Group: Zamaril.

Region of Origin: the northern hill-country.

Present Territory: Drênad, from their traditional capital Nûlakad. Traditional enemies of the Tuktanai, they were responsible for the extermination of the latter's nobility after the conquest of their realm in TA 2916.
Leader: Amâvlar (high chieftain).

ÔKAMA

Tribal Group: Sîril.
Region of Origin: the southeastern coastal forests of Mûmakan.
Present Territory: They rule the Black Númenórean colonies and Kîranaic trading outposts on the northern coast of Ugruzâyan. They are mainly fishermen and are relatively skilled seafarers. The Ôkama are followers of the *ûmala* Akava and are friendly with the people of the city of Pharabâs, with whom they are akin.
Leader: Abûndal (high chieftain)

SÔRBAHLAM

Tribal Group: Sîril
Region of Origin: the southern rainforest of Mûmakan.
Present Territory: the islands of Mûlambûr and the few Kîranai cities of Ugruzâyan. Their original capital was Dûrlam, but the Sôrbahlam found it easier to rule their lands from the fortress of Bûramak on the main island of Mûlambûr. They are followers of the *ûmala* Lakabah.
Leader: Marai (high chieftain).

SÛMANI

Tribal Group: Sîril.
Region of Origin: the southeast cape of Mûmakan.
Present Territory: the islands of Kirakh and most of the Irakh chain. They are a bit more peaceful than the other Mûmakanda tribes and often act as traders, which is one of the reasons they are friendly with the city of Pharabâs.
Leader: Shalar (priest of their tribal *ûmala* Akava).

ÛMALATHÛMA

Tribal Group: Kralakril.
Region of Origin: the Amba Mûdaka jungle.
Present Territory: Dûshera and the borderlands of Geshân. Their capital is the sanctuary of Ûmakad, where the Mûmakanda kings are entombed. They are fanatic followers of Makûma and their highest *mûmathûmûr* is traditionally also the *makûbar* of the Mûmakan and counselor of its kings.
Leader: Tûru Makûbar (high priest of Makûma).

ÛSIRGÂMA

Tribal Group: Sîril.
Region of Origin: the southern shores of the Bay of Gan.
Present Territory: Ahava and the Sealands around the Isle of Fate. Mightiest of the Sîril, they live mostly by fishing and hunting, and are relatively experienced seamen. It was they who subjugated the seafaring nation of Gan and took control of their fleet, enabling the Mûmakanril to conquer most of the Southern Archipelago.
Leader: Abûdur (high chieftain).

HISTORY

In the Elder Days, the lands of Ardor were still wild and empty of people. At that time, the ancient Sindori (Q. "Grey Mountains") arose in western Haradwaith and the Southern Heat. To the east there was not yet an Inner Sea. In the woods already lived the first animals, and many Maiar walked the lands. The Valar Oromë, Nessa and Yavanna made the wondrous dark woods which covered almost all the South until the Ages of the Sun, and Yavanna made many animals to dwell in the wide lands. Aulë let spread hills, and between the Sindori in the west and the Mallori in the east, he raised the Ered Laranor. The lamp Ormal illuminated the land, and the land was at peace.

When Melkor returned to Arda, he sent many of his servants into the farthest South. He poisoned Ulmo's rivers and perverted animals into gruesome beasts, which roamed the dark woods and hunted the creatures of the Valar. Then demons attacked the servants of the Valar. In a great earthquake, Melkor destroyed the mountain-base of Ormal, which rose in the eastern part of Haradwaith, where the Ered Harmal stood. This was the cause of the sundering of what was later called Ugruzâyan from the main continental landmass. Where the mountain had once stood, a great flood broke in and created the Inner Seas. At the beginning of the First Age of the Sun, Dark Elves, fleeing from wars with Men, first entered the dark woods of the South. One of these clans, the Kinn-lai, crossed the Sindori and

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MASTER OF THE TAMA (M 82) **RAZARAC (M 78)**

THE MIRROR OF FIRE

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Ogladalo Vatra is the name given by the Bozishnarod to the vast stone plain covering the southeastern reaches of Haradwaith. Uninhabitable to all save the Covshek-pust, the desert nomads who wander its fringes, the Mirror of Fire is thought to mark the conflagration of Ormal, the primeval lamp which the Valar raised in the South to light the world before the birth of the Trees. In the overthrow of this lamp, Morgoth was aided by many powerful demons. One of these, the **Razarac (M 78),** still haunts the scorched waste.

In spite of its dangers, legends of Ormal and the First Spring of Arda brought about by its light attract those in quest of arcane knowledge. The **Master of the Tama (M 82)** is one such seeker. *Tama,* the Bozishnara word for darkness, is the name of a once-secret brotherhood of sorcerers *(karalija)* devoted to unraveling the mystery of lightlessness. Now enjoying the patronage of Carnen Mek, one of the lords of Bozisha-Dar, the Master of the Tama braves the perils of the Ogladalo Vatra in search of Fuinur's Well, whose dark waters are said to course beneath its blasted surface.

Holding aloft his scrying blade, the sorcerer divines a path that will lead him safely across the burning plain. But other forces conspire to hinder him. The Razarac, guardian of the Mirror's secrets, rises out of a rift and attempts to disrupt the spell. Yet the Master of the Tama is not without allies. Kindling a spirit-fire with a piece of desert amber, his left hand becomes a beacon to summon supernatural aid.

Assistance is not long in coming: the **Lesinavi (M 80)** awaken. Taking their name from *lesina,* the Bozishnara word for corpse, these undead creatures stalk the wastes in search of living flesh to devour (or so the tales tell). Whatever they may be, the *karalij* is able to use his sorcerous powers to dominate their bestial will, commanding them to attack the Razarac.

Though possessed of a changeable *fana*, the Razarac must maintain its current form in order to affect the intruder's spell. The mighty demon will make short work of the Lesinavi, but the ghoulish minions need distract it for only a few moments more for the Master of the Tama to procure the information he needs.

LESINAVI (M 80)

wandered into the Sunlands while a related clan, the Cuind, pressed on into the Southern Heat; another clan, the Pái, stayed a while in the lands south of the Ered Laranor before moving on to the islands of the Inner Sea.

Drûgic peoples wandered into the South from Palisor in central Middle-earth. Soon after, the first Swertings followed from the south of Palisor, fleeing from Orcs. At first these Men had allied with the Orcs against the Elves, because of the lies of the Maia Fankil; but later the Orcs made war against them, pursumg their former allies.

Corrupted by Fankil's lies, these Men first lived in the savannas and semi-deserts of Haradwaith. The Swertings began to drive out the Drûgic peoples. Most of these moved north, but others hid in secret places or crossed the Sindori.

At the dawn of the Third Age, Mûmakan was in conflict with all its neighbors.

Out of these Swerting migrations emerged different peoples who took Melkor to be their god. Many followed him, but some, repenting, returned to the worship of the Valar. One of the Swerting peoples, ancestors of the Sharaeke, crossed the Ered Laranor and founded a mighty realm in the Utter South under the tutelage of the Pái.

Of the Swarthy Men who migrated into the northwest of Middle-earth, some (the Baradhrim) followed the Drughu to the north, while others (the ancestors of the Haradrim) came as hunters and gatherers into Haradwaith. The ancestors of the Haradrim drove away the Swertings. In Sîrayn and Raj the two peoples mixed, but most of the Swertings crossed the Sindori and settled in the Sunlands and the Southern Heat. The Kinn-lai hid from these Men in the dense jungles.

The ancestors of the Mûmakanril, Kîranai, Ûsakanil, Ganim, Râkhe, Sâre, Drêl, Pel, Adena, Magri, Sekâre, Drênim, Mûlambûril and Sedêre now emerged from different Swerting tribes. At this time the demigod Amâv first appeared and united the Mûmakanda tribes. But with the founding of Mûmakan as a kingdom, Amâv suddenly vanished, promising to return and lead the Mûmakanril to victory over all the peoples of the Utter South.

At the end of the First Age, earthquakes engendered by the War of Wrath shattered the Sindori, causing the western part of the Southern Heat to flood. In their wake, these cataclysmic geographical changes brought about the present distribution of peoples in the Utter South. The Adena, Sedêre and Drêl dwelt in the Southern Heat, still separated from the Sunlands by the Bay of Ûsakan. Between the remnants of the Sindori and the Bay of Ûsakan lived the Pel, Magri and Ûsakanil. In the Sunlands lived the Sharaeke, Tuktanai, Kîranai and Mûmakanril and in the dark woods of the South lived the Kinn-lai and the Cuind. The last of the Drûgic tribes of the Utter South were the Chaialla. East of the Sunlands, on the Ivory Peninsula were the Ganim, Drênim, Sekâk and Ahava. The Râkhe, Sâre and other tribes lived on the islands of the Southern Archipelago.

Some seven centuries later, the Númenóreans began to visit the coasts of Middle-earth, bringing agriculture and metallurgy to the people of Haradwaith. At this time the Mûmakanril began raiding the lands of the Kîranai and the Southern Heat. The Númenóreans meanwhile founded colonies along in the southwestern peninsula of the Southern Heat: Hyarnúmentë (Khâradûnê), Elorna, Mírenórë (Zimrathâni), and Ciryatanórë (Anbalkûmagân). In SA 1300, another colony, Tantûrak, was also founded upon the northern coast of the Bay of Ûsakan. This led to conflicts with the Mûmakanril, whose warbands were regularly raiding the eastern lands of the Southern Heat at the time.

In this time of tumult in the Sunlands, Jí Indûr made himself king of the Kîranai, and formed the Lar into a kingdom under his oppressive rule. But the freedom loving Kîranai continually rebelled against the oppressor, forcing Indûr to flee to Mûmakan, where he received the fourth Ring of Power from Sauron and claimed to be the returned Amâv. In the following decades, Jí Indûr reorganized the warrior culture of the Mûmakanril, extending his conquests into all the lands of the Utter South and aiding the lord of Tantûrak in his bid for independence from Númenor.

When Ar-Pharazôn came to power, he reconquered Tantûrak and other rebellious colonies and took Sauron to Númenor as his prisoner. But after the destruction of Númenor, the lords of some of its colonies in the Southern Heat advanced royal pretensions. The lord of Tantûrak claimed himself to be Ar-Pharazôn's rightful heir. His peers rejected his claim, plunging the colonies into internecine warfare that provided the Mûmakanril with an opportunity to extend their sway over all the lands east of Kîranai-lâr by the end of the Second Age.

At the dawn of the Third Age, Mûmakan was in conflict with all its neighbors. After an era embracing hundreds of wars (a period which lasted almost the whole Third Age, including many defeats, victories, rebellions and internal conflicts among the twelve tribes), the demigod Amâv returned and led the Mûmakanril to victory against their enemies. Allied with Tantûrak, the Mûmakanril were able to re-conquer all of Ûrêzâin, except the Elves of Tâliran, who hid themselves in the deep jungles. Backed by his Mûmakanda allies, the lord of Tantûrak began to invade the Southern Heat.

Meanwhile, to the north of the Ered Laranor, Sîrayn fell under the rule of the Black Serpent (formerly the Army of the Southern Dragon). The kings of Mûmakan then allied themselves with the forces of the Black Serpent and aided them in conquering the Haradwaith. Mûmakanda forces took part in the Battle of the Pelennor Fields, but both they and their allies were utterly destroyed in that war, and only rumors reached the Utter South and reported of vast armies and a horrible king in the far northern lands.

SETTLEMENTS

The Mûmakanril rule the entire Sunlands apart from Tantûrak. Their territory therefore includes Mûmakan proper, the lands of Dûshera, the Kîranai-lâr, Hathor, the Mûlambûr, Tuktan, the lands of the Ivory Peninsula, Gan, E-Ahava, Sekak, Dren (which Mûmakanda warriors annihilated at the end of the Third Age) and most of the Southern Archipelago, embracing the islands of Cevra, Llikh and Amirakh. The eastern islands of the Archipelago are controlled by the allied forces of the Vulmaw.

Amaru—the great capital of Mûmakan and holy city of Jí Amâv, this fortress is the largest urban center in the region. It lies south of the Kann-Shamûrda swamplands.

Ambadar—a great jungle-city on the south-westernmost peninsula of the western Bandani hills, Ambadar is a center for the Mûmakanda warrior-caste.

Ambûrak—a mighty island-fortress set on a small isle in Koros Bay.

Amûdak—an important city on the shores of Lake Mûda in the Shamûrda swamplands of central Mûmakan.

Batamak—a fortress in the Mîmakai hills.

Batumû—a Mûmakanda border stronghold near the Kîranai-lar.

Bûrmudas—a Mûmakanda fortress situated on a steep cape of Koros Bay. It controls the eastern Kîranai-lâr.

Dûrdamal—a Mûmakanda slave-city in southern Hathor.

Dûrlam—Sîr Dûrla.

Eärex-Dâr (Aurax-Dûr)—an ancient place said to hold great terrors (and great treasures), many people believe it to be somewhere in southern Mûmakan. Its precise location is unknown.

Elemad—a Kîranaiac town in the hill-country east of Geshân. Elemad often trades with the Dwarves who make the neighboring hills their home.

Engkîr—a known refuge of the xenophobic Khêlnor Elves, even the Kinn-lai of Tâliran avoid this place of their evil kin.

Gaven — the ancient capital of Geshân, Gaven is now nothing more than a ruin, nearly swallowed by the surrounding marshlands.

Inkamad — Sîr Inkam.

Isamal — Isa Sîrmak.

Isarak — Makai Kamûdu.

Ithilkîr—a Khêlnor refuge in the hill-country of central Tuktan, the Mûmakanril and Tuktanai shun its entrances.

Kirnak—an old ruin in northern Tâliran.

Korlan—the capital of the Kîranai-lâr. Lying west of Mûmakan, the Kîranaiac republic once stood in rivalry with Sarûl as the mercantile hub of Ûrêzâin between the lands north of the Ered Laranor, the Southern Heat and the isles of the Southern Archipelago. Since the Mûmakanril conquered the Lâr, Sarûl has managed to eclipse much of Korlan's former position, but there are still many rich Kîranaiac families in Korlan who cooperate with the Mûmakanda oppressors and profit of the trade with Pharabâs and the Vulmaw islands.

Mamûri— an old Kîranaiac fortress.

Manalkêrke (Menelcarca)—a legendary Elven stronghold, said to lie in the Ered Laranor north of the great lake known as the Pêl Dushera.

Marûd —on the island Marûbûr.

Mîrak—Makai Bandani.

Mîrdamas — Tuktan.

Mirisgrôth—an Elven stronghold on a volcanic island in Kôros Bay, said to be a sanctuary of the dangerous Khêlnor (and therefore avoided by most outsiders).

Mûmarak—the capital of Mûmakan before Amarû was built, Mûmarak is a large cave-system in the Kamûdu hills in the south-eastern peninsula. It is now the seat of power of the followers of Hagama.

Mûru — Kann- Shamûrda.

Nûlakad—a great city in northeastern Mûmakan, near the Tuktanaic border. The Mûmakanril here live by fishing and boat-building, and have many contacts with Sâre tribes and the Vulmaw Easterlings.

Ogamad — Sîr Sûmani.

Oskanda—Kann-Shamûrda.

Oss-Lîrion (Laurrë's Manor)—an old Elven refuge in eastern Tâliran.

Pharabâs (Damaldar) —a Númenórean colony set in a sheltered bay upon the southwesternmost tip of Mûmakan. Its original settlers were survivors of a Númenórean shipwreck who befriended the peaceful Ôkama and Sûmani tribes, and built Pharabâs (Ad. "Golden Place") in the style of a Númenórean colonial settlement. It as a wonder that Pharabâs survived, lying only a few hundred miles southwest of the old Mûmakanda capital. But Pharabâs still exists in the Third Age, even though the bloodlines of its inhabitants have dwindled or become merged with those of the Mûmakanril, Pharabâs and the native villages allied to it are the only democratic community east of the Kîranai-lâr in the Utter South, for Pharabâs is ruled by a council of wisemen chosen by its people. The city has developed into a formidable trading power, thanks to its good relations with Vulman merchants. Mumarak tolerates the existence of Pharabâs because it too profits from commerce with the Vulmaw.

Ramôrth—a great border fortress in northern Tantûrak, its garrison holds off the -warlike mountain tribes of the Ered Laranor.

Sarûl—the capital of Tantûrak, Sarûl was once a mighty trade center and in competition with Korlan, but since the Mûmakanril conquered the Kîranai-lâr, Sarûl rose to the most important trade point between Drêl and Vulm-Shryak.

Shendal — a town in the southern Kîranai-lâr, regularly frequented by the neighboring Kinn-lai.

Sirûl — Sîr Sûmani.

Siska—Kann-Shamûrda.

Tanith.—former capital of Hathor, southeast of Mûmakan.

Tarû-Makar— capital of the Ganim before they were subjugated by the Mûmakanril. Since the Mûmakanril are the worst seamen of the Utter South, they forced the Ganim to transport their armies and embassies, which enabled them to conquer most of the Southern Archipelago.

Teäreng (Taurang)—a secret site somewhere in Tantûrak, its exact position is unknown (though in the tales of Ûsakanian mages it has acquired a reputation for being a fabulous shrine).

Tir-Onni (Taurondë) — capital of Tâliran, the Elven realm south of the Kîranaiac republic, Tir-Onni is a collection of great arboreal flets and a large cave-complex, built beyond densely wooded hills.

Tirgôroth—an old Elvish ruin on a volcanic island off the coast of Mag.

Ty-Ar-Rana—one of the many legendary sites of the Utter South, it is believed to have been the capital of the Pái before they left the lands of Geshân.

Ûmakad—the cult center for Makûma in the dense Mûdaka jungle of northern Mûmakan, this temple contains a great, partly subterranean, fortress featuring a spectacular tomb complex. Ûmakad stands in rivalry with Amarû, which is ruled by the priests of Amâv.

Uskanda— Ubur Uskad.

RELIGION

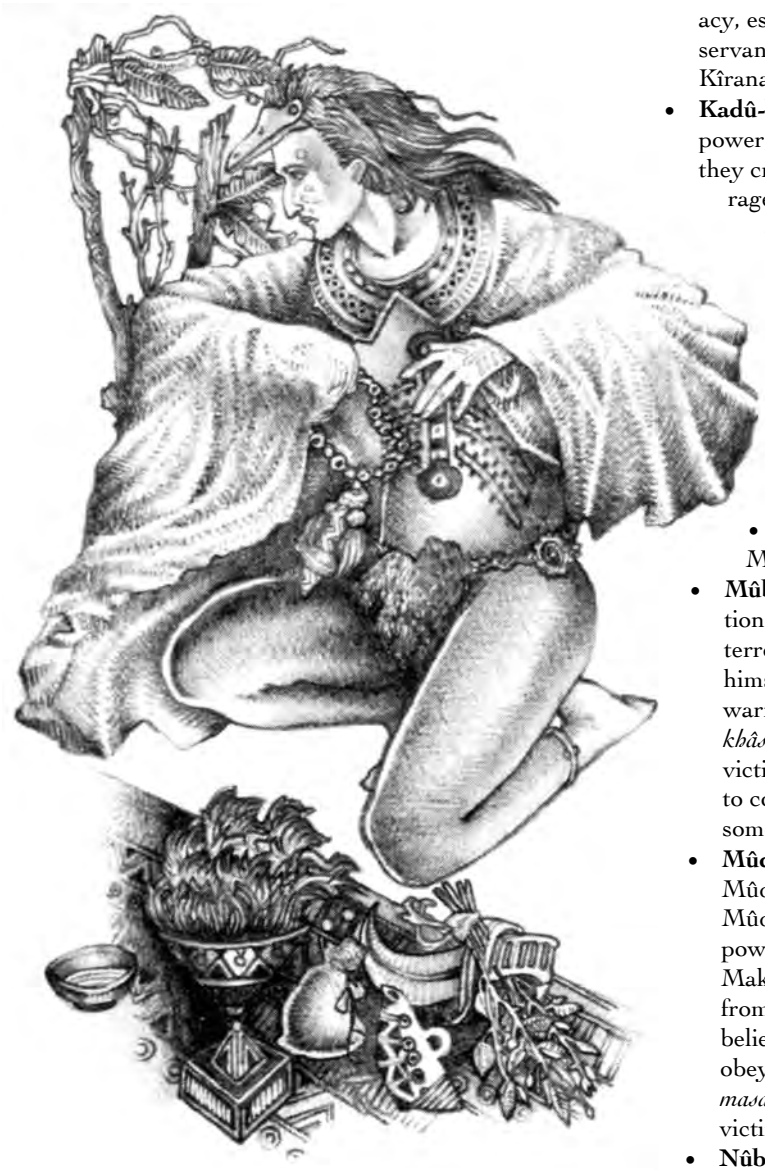
The Mûmakanril worship a number of powerful *ûmala* (M. "spirits"). The greater of these correspond in function to the Valar and Maiar, but many *ûmala* are identified with great heroes or kings. Much of Mûmakanda *cultus* derives from the mystical religion of lost Geshân, and many Mûmakanda deities correspond with those of the Sharaeke and Kîranai, since the ancient Geshânians were pupils of the Pái and learned from them much about the Valar and other mighty Ainur.

A Mûmakanda hero who has been assimilated to the *ûmala* is thought capable of rebirth through power gathered with the help of his devotees.

Belief in reincarnation also forms a part of *ûmala* worship. A Mûmakanda hero -who has been assimilated to the *ûmala* is thought capable of rebirth through power gathered with the help of his devotees. The author of this idea was Jí Indûr, who claimed to be the reincarnation of Amâv, one of the mightier *ûmala*.

The chief *ûmala* include:

- **Akava (god of water)**—ruler of rivers and the sea, great whales sometimes seen off the southern coasts are regarded as sacred to him. For this reason.



the Mûmakanril (apart from the fanatical adherence of Mûdhala) never hunt whales. Akava's artifact is a magical bottle.

- **Akûnar (god of rage)**—neither evil nor good, Akûnar is the spirit of uncontrolled rage. Next to Mûbadar, Akûnar is the main spirit of the warrior-caste.
- **Ahsûli (goddess of wisdom)** — sister of Kadû-baka, Ahsûli is the never dying spirit of wisdom and pity.
- **Amâv (founder of Mûmakan)**—in later ages the Nazgûl Jí Indûr claimed to be Amâv reborn, taking up the rule of Mûmakan on more than one occasion.
- **Badagi (goddess of blood)**—like her brother Akûnar, Badagi is regarded as neither evil nor good. Her holy animal is the lion.
- **Hagama (the sky god)**—brother of Makûma, god of the underworld, the Lord of the Clouds was originally the principal deity of the Mûmakanril. When Jí Indûr first united the tribes, he accepted Hagama's supremacy, giving the desperate tribes peace. Indûr later became a cruel and mysterious man, performing strange rites which he claimed gave him the power to "dive into the Spirit-sea" (as the Mûmakanril call the other-world). After Indûr's disappearance, the priests of Makûma, claiming to be the rightful heirs to Hagama's legacy, established the twin kings to rule Mûmakan as Makûma's servants. (Haerangil believes Hagama to be the same deity as the Kîranaiac sky god Horesh.)
- **Kadû-baka (god of death)**—the Mûmakanril fear Kadû-baka's power, for he is cold and ungracious. The *mûmathûmril,* when they create living death, offer sacrifice to Kadû-baka to cool his rage at the deed. Kadû-baka's ritual artifact is a kind of sarcophagus, the *baka-mûmaɜa.*
- **Lakabah (god of journeys and the jungle) —** the ûmala most often worshipped by hunters, Lakabah is said to have made the great woods of Mûmakan.
- **Makûma (god of destruction)—**brother to Hagama and destroyer of Mankind, Makûma gives those who follow him unbelievable powers and destroys those who withstand him. The *mûmathumril* believe that Makûma will one day be reincarnated and destroy the world. He is the most feared among the *ûmala.*
- **Mamûli (the earth goddess)—**the bringer of spring, Mamûli's symbol is a stone-amulet, the *baðûna.*
- **Mûbadar (god of war)**—also known as the Lord of Destruction, Mûbadar is a servant of Makûma. A spirit of unbridled terror and rampant destruction, no *ûmala,* except of Makûma himself, is as cruel as Mûbadar. He is the main *ûmala* of the warrior caste. Mûbadar s artifact is a ritual whip called the *khâɜh-mûbaðha* or *khaɜh-famûth,* used for strangling sacrificial victims. (Because of this symbol, Haerangil believes Mûbadar to correspond with Gothmog the Balrog. However, there are some similarities to Sâth, the Kîranaiac god of evil.)
- **Mûdhala (god of darkness)** — all-seeing, some tales make Mûdhala the son of Makûma, others his servant. Either way, Mûdhala is seen by many as an incarnation of Makûma's power. Mûdhala lives at the center of the earth, enforcing Makûma's will. The power of the *mûmathûmril* is said to derive from their worship of this spirit. Most of Mûdhala's adherents believe that their worship justifies any action, so long as they obey his rules. Mûdhala's artifact is a ritual dagger called *maɜah-mûðhala,* used for cutting out the heart of a sacrificial victim.
- **Nûba-baka (god of visions)** — Kadû-baka's more benign brother. The *mûmathûmril* often ingest toxic herbs and play drums to commune with Nûba-baka and receive visions of the future.

THE PRIESTLY CASTE

The term *mûmathûmril* (sing, *mûmathûmûr)* generally refers to all priests who serve the *ûmala.* The head of all *mûmathûmril* is the *makûbar,* who serves also as counselor to the Mûmakanda kings. *Mûmathûmril* fall into two classes: the *hagril* and the *anû lôril.*

Hagril (sing, *hagar)* represent the more powerful *mûmathûmril.* They are tribal priests and often leaders of sects. They care for the temples of larger settlements, officiate at sacrifices and are counselors of chieftains. *Anû lôril* (sing. *anû lôar)* are more often priests of smaller villages, hermits, conjurers and healers of nomadic tribes or servants of the *hagril.* Some *anû lôril* contend against the strict worship of Makûma, seeing themselves as neutral parties who serve neither the good *ûmala* nor the evil, but who sometimes conjure an evil power to do good things or a good power to visit misfortune upon others. However, both *hagrð* and *anû lôril* belong to the same caste, so that simple classification is often difficult.

Another function of the *mûmathumril* is to brew strange potions and enchantments called *mûgri* (mostly love charms or

banes). A *mûgri* might be a draught of strength or a bag filled with magical ingredients -which must be buried near the hut of its intended target. Not all *mûgri* prove efficacious, but their use is widespread in the Southern Heat — especially in the Númenórean colonial cities, where witches and hags supply their customers with their daily dose of magic, mostly among the slaves and lower classes, just as the many indigenous wizards do among agricultural villages and nomad camps of the Drêl and Pel.

Every Mûmakanda tribe has its own spirit, its patron deity. Amâv -was the main *ûmala* of the tribe which first came under tutelage of Indûr. The tribes that later became the rulers of Mûmakan had Makûma or Mûdhala as their tribal *ûmala.* Coastal tribes tend to have Akava as tribal *ûmala,* while hunting tribes naturally favor Lakabah. The more aggressive tribes always choose malevolent spirits such as Mûdhala or even Makûma. The priests of these *ûmala* wield greater power than chieftains. In fact, Mûmakanda kings very often only hold military power, while political decisions lie in the hands of the high priest, the *makûbar.*

It sometimes happens that a *mûmathûmûr,* seeking communion with a peaceful spirit, like Masûli or Nûba-baka, is suddenly possessed by a more dangerous spirit...

The Mûmakanril entreat the *ûmala* through rituals conducted by the *mûmathûmril.* Most rituals are more or less private affairs. (Public rituals are held only to mark special occasions, such as the nomination of a new king or the offering of human sacrifices before a war and following a victory.) A family or individual seek the favor of the *ûmala* through a *mûmathûmûr,* who in turn asks the head priest for permission to hold a ritual in the presence of the applicant and a number of witnesses/helpers.

The *mûmathûmûr* tries to reach the spirit through trance and various magical dances, supported by magical drums and several assistants. Sacrifices can take the form of fruits, animals and, more seldom, humans. The *mûmathûmûr* enters into a state of possession by the *ûmala* or receives a vision. There are also recognized means for the *ûmala* to indicate rejection of a bequest. Regardless of the success or failure of the ceremony, the *mûmathûmûr* is entitled to compensation by the party who requested the ritual.

It sometimes happens that a *mûmathûmûr,* seeking communion with a peaceful spirit, like Masûli or Nûba-baka, is suddenly possessed by a more dangerous spirit, like Mûbadar or even Makûma. Such incidents can prove deadly for the tribe and the *mûmathûmûr.* At times an inexperienced *mûmathûmûr* dies, overpowered by the supernatural power of the deity. In other cases the spirit may demand a price for the release of its victim, often a human sacrifice or special offering.

Several important artifacts and components always attend Mûmakanda ritual. Each *ûmala* is identified by its own artifact, which is used by *mûmathûmril.* to assist in contacting the deity. Each tribe likewise has its own unique totem (called a *vamû)* which displays a special arrangement of magical signs, often related to the symbol of the tribe's *ûmala.* A representation of this *ûmala* is often carved into the tribe's *mirta-badûn,* a ritual pillar to which sacrificial victims are tied. A *mirta-badûn* is also found in the ritual chamber of great city temples, even when these possess more elaborate altars.

Another important ritual item, used to support both the trances of the *mûmathûmril* and the dances of the warrior caste, are the magical drums called *mûrathil* (sing. *mûratha).* Those skilled in the use of these drums, the *rathamûril* (sing, *rathamûrar)* enjoy a special position in their tribe. The *rathamûril* are learned in both Mûratha (the secret drum-language) as well as in the lore, history and magical songs of their tribe.

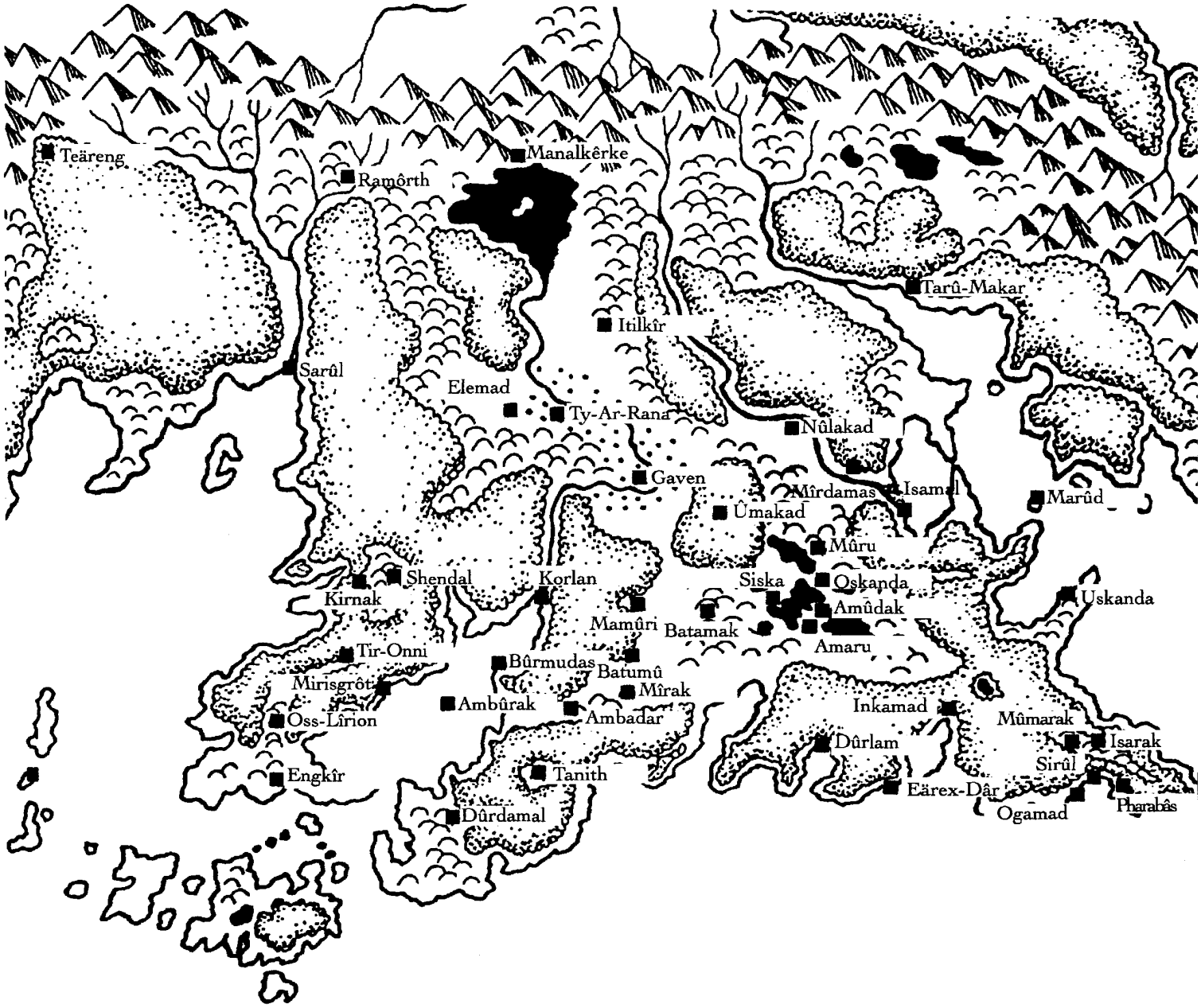
NEIGHBORING PEOPLES

- **Ahava—** the original inhabitants of the northernmost lands ruled by the Mûmakanril, the Ahava originally consisted of a small caste of free families who ruled unfree commoners. The Ahava, who established their small realm east of the great rainforest of Sara Bask, lived mostly off the ivory trade from the smaller cousins of the *mûmakil*, the so-called *zamamakil*, which live in the plains and lighter forest regions throughout the Ivory Peninsula. For years the Ahava lived under the protection of-warrior-women from the Isle of Fate, but in the end fell under the rule of the Mûmakanril who invaded the small kingdom by land and sea.
- **Chaialla—** one of the Drugic tribes who migrated into the South during the First Age, their numerous but scattered bands live in the deep forests of the Southern Heat. The only sizable group inhabits Pel, but a few also stalk in the forests of Dûshera. There are even some smaller Chaialla tribes in the deeper jungles of northern Mûmakan, but they always live in fear of Mûmakanda hunting-raids. The Chaialla have darker skin and curlier hair than their northerly cousins, and paint themselves -with magic symbols and some even have tattoos which are said to render them invisible in the jungles. All Chaialla speak the ancient Drugic tongue Chailukk, which few other Men have learned. Legends say that the Chaialla are led by a mysterious figure named Taghi-nûgh. It is not quite certain who the Taghi-nûgh really is —the spirit of a chieftain who led the Chaialla into the Utter South, or an immortal being who haunts the deepest jungle of the Utter South. The Chaialla themselves always speak of Taghi-nûgh as though he were a living person, though he is supposedly two thousand years old. (Haerangil reports that this has led some to believe that Taghi-nûgh is in fact a Maiarin spirit or one of the Avari, but the Chaialla have ever denied this, asserting that Taghi-nûgh is one of their own.)
- **Drênim—** the wild mountain tribes who roam the volcanic mountains of the Ivory Peninsula are akin to the Ganim and share their language. The Mûmakanril conquered the lands of Drênad at the end of the Third Age, and most of the settled Drênim are subjects to the Nûlakana tribe, but the true, mountain-dwelling Drenim remain relatively free, because they stay out of reach of the Mûmakanril's *mûmak*-mounted forces.
- **Ganim—** a people of fishermen and seafarers who live in the coastal forests of Gan, the region east of the Mûmakan, the Ganim are akin to the Drênim and Kîranai, having characteristically black skin and curly hair. The Ganim are Mûmakanda subjects into the late Third Age, ruled by the Ûsirgâma tribe. It was mainly the Ganim's experience as boat-builders and mariners that enabled the Mûmakanril to conquer most of the Southern Archipelago.
- **Hathorians**—an enigmatic people, the Men of Hathor who dwell southwest of Mûmakan are clearly of Adanic origin (probably Eriadorians forcibly settled in the Utter South by the Númenóreans in the Second Age). Tall, fair of hair and bright in eye, the Hathorians are a warlike people, but have a strong sense of justice. At the end of the Third Age, the Mûmakanda tribe of the Batani control the land of

Hathor, but many of the Hathorians hide in the dense woods, still resisting to their oppressors.

- **Kinn-lai**—a Dark Elven tribe, akin to the Cuind of the Southern Heat and the tribes of the Last Desert, the Kinn-lai are a tall and fair people, though their complexion is somewhat darker than that of the Eldar, and they mostly have dark hair and grey or brown eyes. Descendants of Dark Elves who escaped from wars against Orcs and Men in southern Palisor in the First Age, the Kinn-lai have close contact with the Kîranai, one of the more civilized Swerting peoples of the Sunlands. They also have relations with the secret Elven realm in the forest of Drêl on the peninsula of the Southern Heat, and with the survivors of the sunken Elven island of Disujnor. The Mûmakanril avoid the forests of Tâliran because the Kinn-lai vigilantly watch their borders, killing any Mûmakanril who come near.
- **Khêlnor**— an enigmatic Dark Elven tribe of the Utter South, the Khêlnor are believed by some to be descendants of Dark Elves who tried to fight their fading with dark sorcery and became corrupted. The Khêlnor are tall with dark hair and dark eyes, but appear exhausted and bony, often showing a cold and cruel demeanor. Remnants of these corrupted Elves live in secret places all over the Utter South. The Khêlnor vigilantly guard these sanctuaries so that hardly any witnesses from encounters with this dangerous people escape.
- **Kîranai**—the inhabitants of Kîranai-lâr, the densely settled lands of Kôros Bay in western Mûmakan, are a tall, slim people with deep black skin and noble faces. Some believe that the Kîranai of the distant past married Elves of the Kinn-lai. But even if these legends be false, the contemporary Kîranai have strong relations with the Kinn-lai and there are many settlements in which both, Men and Elves, live in peace together. In origin, the Kîranai were a reclusive jungle tribe without great knowledge, but their contact with the (by mortal standards) wise and gifted Kinn-lai, and with the ancient folk of Geshân, brought them great power. The Kîranai were once gifted traders, and had well trained warriors, but even they failed to resist the Mûmakanda hosts that invaded their lands in the late Third Age. Some of the wealthy Kîranaiac families cooperate with the oppressors, which affords them some freedom of action, but most Kîranai live under the oppression of the Mûmakanril.
- **Mûlambûril** — the fisherfolk of the Mûlambûr islands south of the Mûmakan are closely akin to the Mûmakanril, being descendants of Mûmakanda slaves who revolted against their masters and fled to the islands of Mûlambûr and Ûnadbûr. After the Mûmakanril regained their ancient realm, the Mûlambûril were again reduced to slavery.
- **Pái** —a Dark Elven tribe which came to the Utter South in the Elder Days. Many of them, for they are a water-loving people, moved to the islands of the Southern Archipelago, but a small group stayed in Geshân and became the teachers of the first Men who arrived later in the First Age and who founded the mysterious culture of Geshân. The ancient culture of Geshân vanished by unknown reasons, but one can still find mysterious old monuments in the swamplands of Geshân and in the deep rainforests of the surrounding lands, which still tell from the power of this lost people. The mysterious sunken Elven island of Disujnor is believed by many to have been a refuge of Elves who escaped the fall of Geshân.
- **Sâre**—living on the western isles of the Southern Archipelago, these brutal Swerting tribes are fearsome cannibals and head-hunters. Once nothing more than scattered groups of desperate tribes, some without a permanent homeland, the Sâre formed a strong military state which even controlled Mûmakan for a brief period in the Third Age. Distantly akin to the Mûmakanril and Râkhe, the Sâre are tall and have dark brown (almost black) skin and black eyes, but they are slimmer and less stout than their kinsfolk, and tend to have bony faces and strong muscles. Some of their tribes shave their heads, while others prefer to wear their curly hair in huge, red-dyed locks. Some Sârean tribes, living near the coasts of Mûmakan and Gan, are more peaceful than those from E-Sarûl Sâre. They live in fortified forest villages as hunters and fishers, and often trade with the Mûmakanril and the Vulmaw Easterlings. The name of this tribe is derived from the word *sâr*, meaning "warrior."
- **Sekâk**—the original inhabitants of the kingdom of the same name, the Sekâk are closely akin to the Sare, but are far more peaceful. Farming and fishing along the southeastern cape of the Ivory Peninsula and mostly known for their spice-growing skills, the Sekâk were conquered by the Mûmakanril at the end of the Third Age and came under the rule of the Akrilgânak tribe.
- **Sharaeke** — small by Swerting standards, with yellowish brown skin and long, plaited hair and beards, the main inhabitants of the Dûshera hills are also one of the poorest peoples of the Sunlands. Allegedly the last descendants of the people of Geshân, once a proud and strong people, their kingdom is long since destroyed, only ruins of their land's former glory remaining. The Sharaeke were only scattered tribes, without a strong leadership, when they came under the yoke of the Mûmakanril. Now they vegetate as *ûmalathûma* slaves.
- **Sigin-Mablâd** — a Dwarven tribe that moved into the Ered Laranor in the Elder Days, they are also known as Bavor's folk or the Cave-dwarves. Their Khuzdul name signifying "Stiffbeards," they have darker hair than their northern brethren and tend to wear their beards relatively short. Their capital originally was Mablâd-dûm in the western Ered Laranor, but soon the tribe split up and two other principalities, Narad-dûm and Baruzimabûl (Kh. "Black Flame") which lie east and southwest of their capital emerged. Some Dwarves from Narad-dûm actually live among the hills west of Geshân, having been befriended by the Kîranai and Tuktanai, but they show little love for the Mûmakanril and the gates to their city are hidden.
- **Tantûrakim**— a mighty military culture northwest of the Kîranai-Lâr. The Men of Tantûrak are ruled by a small caste of Black Númenóreans. Believing themselves to be the rightful inheritors of Númenor's legacy in the Utter South, the imperialistic Tantûrakim engaged themselves in a continuous struggle with Mûmakan for thousands of years, but at the end of the Third Age the King of Tantûrak and the warlords of Jí Amâv finally allied with each other, which enabled the

Khêlnor— an enigmatic Dark Elven tribe of the Utter South, the Khêlnor are believed by some to be descendants of Dark Elves who tried to fight their fading with dark sorcery and became corrupted.



Mûmakanril to conquer all the Sunlands and brought Tantûrak in a position to extend their empire southwest into the Southern Heat.

- **Tuktanai —** closely akin to the Kîranai, the people of neighboring Tuktan were originally coastal fishermen and traders and herders and primitive farmers. But when their resistance to the Mûmakanril proved stronger than their enemies expected and allied themselves to the Kîranai, the Mûmakanril made a cruel example of them. All Tuktanaic chieftains, priests and persons of respect were executed and every common man, woman and child enslaved.
- **Vulmaw—**one of the great eastern group of peoples known as the "Black Easterlings," the Vulmaw uphold a mighty warrior culture and rule the Inner Sea, their settlements range from the Southern Archipelago to Codya and the farthest East. Once a mighty sea-kingdom, many Vulman colonies have since become independent, developing into powerful city-states. However, the original Vulman realm and the fleets of Cuivak Vulmaw remain formidable. The Vulmaw are not only fierce sea-warriors but also clever merchants, the wealthier of whom reside in the coastal settlements of Mûmakan. The city of Pharabâs profits especially from trade with the Vulmaw. The Vulmaw are mostly small and stout and of reddish to yellow skin. They shave some parts of their hair and wear the rest long and often forked. Men often grow thin but very long beards; the women often paint their eyelids in strong colors. The native tongue of the Vulmaw is Vulman, but most of them have also learned the common languages of commerce: Apysanic, Chyan, Lôchâw, Ibavar and Mûmakanda. Part of a great eastern confederation of Black Easterling states, the Vulman empire is allied to the Mûmakanril by the treaty of Neak.

THE SISTERS OF ISHTRA

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The Sisters of Ishtra are a cult dedicated to the Bozishnara goddess of love. Embodying both the passionate and the erotic, Ishtra is also seen in her more mystical form as the creative force behind the entire universe. Ishtra's primary shrine is the Ruby Temple located in the city of Esmer (formerly Zimra-zadan), but her cult is found in one form or another throughout the vast region of Haradwaith. Due to the religious sensitivities of their Númenórean inhabitants, the kings of Bellakar have banned the cult in most cities of their realm, but it is extremely powerful along the Forest Coast between Esmer and Bozisha-Dar, and in fact throughout Raj. It has influence wherever Haradrim (and especially Haradrim women) reside, even as far north as Harondor.

ORIGINS AND HISTORY

Ishtra is the third most important deity among the Haradrim, next to her sister (Ladnoca, the moon goddess) and their father (Nadi-manje, the Windlord, king of the gods). Ladnoca was courted by Vatra, the sun god, and the Windlord assented to the marriage. Soon afterwards, however, Vatra rebelled against Nadi-manje and slew him. At the moment of Nadi-manje's death, the king of the gods sent forth his power into his daughter. Thereafter, Vatra and Ladnoca, although married and ostensibly observing their alliance, became locked in eternal strife.

Ishtra, whom the Haradrim identify with Esmer (the Bozishnara name for the morning star), cultivates a careful neutrality between Ladnoca and Vatra. This is why Esmer shines brightest in the hours between the dominion of the sun and the rule of the moon. A legend (actively encouraged by the Nazgûl Akhôrahil), reports that Vatra was unfaithful to his wife, and that through Ishtra he fathered Arsamshakar, the god of sorcery. The identification of Arsamshakar with Akhôrahil is derived from this legend, which the Nazgûl uses for his own profit.

In ancient times, the cult of Ishtra was male-dominated, and priestesses were effectively temple prostitutes; but in TA 1763, Syrsi, a daughter of the Aranî, a noble house from the city of Esmer with historical ties to the kings of Bellakar, overthrew the priests there and established an order made up entirely of women (primarily houris and mystics) who serve the goddess. Syrsi Aranî is still considered the greatest of the Sisters of Ishtra, and her female descen-dents dominate the order. The existence of such strong faith among the Aranî women, and the apparent devotion to the goddess as a specifically female deity, hearkens back to the legendary bond between Queen Zâirinzil of Bellakar and her ill-fated daughter Barûthhîn (Berúthiel), perhaps indicating that Syrsi's female-led coup within the Ishtran order was not without substantial roots.

The principal function of the Sisters is to protect wives and unbetrothed maidens from unwanted male attention and aggressive husbands. The Sisters are also utilized by princes and merchants as spies against rivals. The Sisters are politically neutral, and can often be found working for both sides in a conflict, eagerly gaining what they can from such situations.

Despite their official stance of neutrality, during the years of Sauronic domination in Far Harad the Sisters worked to subvert the cult of Vatra and helped to keep Ladnoca's worship alive. In Harondor, they often worked beside

Gondorian officials to keep Sauronic agents at bay. There was no love lost between the goddess of love and the servants of the Dark Lord.

EXPANSION

The Sisters expand their power through converts, often women whom they have saved from male aggression. Acolytes are acquired from one of two sources. The first source is families who dedicate their daughters to the Order and Sisters who choose prospective candidates themselves. A simple ritual called *kalal'ta* begins the initiation process. The candidate kneels before her future mentor and kisses her feet as a sign of devotion and obedience, the mentor temporarily standing in the role of the goddess.

A second method of conversion involves acquiring temples dedicated to other love goddesses throughout southern Middle-earth, most of whom have certain features in common: local myths of a goddess' divine lineage tends to be subordinated to a more general association with the sea or with distant (and perhaps mythical) islands; they tend to have a single child, often a god of love or sorcery; and they tend to have broadly similar powers.

The Hathorian goddess Asraloya, for example, came to be considered a manifestation of Ishtra late in the Third Age, although a complete synthesis of the two had to wait until the Fourth. Similarly, in Harondor and Harithilien, Ishtra came to take on characteristics of Nessa, the Valië of youth. The Haruze of southern Gondor tend to depict Ishtra dancing and wearing a flowery wreath, an almost unknown phenomenon farther south. This identification is part of the reason for the tolerance shown the Sisters in Harondor by King Telumehtar of Gondor and his immediate successors.

THE TWO VEILS AND THE FIVE KISSES

The Ishtran cult is a mystical order. Therefore, little emphasis is placed upon public ritual. The Sisters meditate upon Ishtra, love and other great theological topics in pursuit of understanding and union with the divine. The cult actually comprises two orders, the Sisters of the White Veil and the Sisters of the Ruby Veil. The White Veils are acolytes, virgins dedicated to serving more experienced Sisters and maintaining the temples and shrines, whereas the Ruby Veils are the travelers, proselytizers, spies, ambassadors and temple leadership of the cult.

A visionary experience heralds the progression from White Veil to Ruby Veil. When their mentors deem them ready, the White Veils meditate alone in a grotto beneath the temple of Esmer where, under the influence of religious devotion and sacred drugs, the acolytes experience sexual union with a divine servant of Ishtra, usually in the form of an angelic being of light. Whether this experience is real or hallucinatory is unknown.

The Five Kisses signify mystical stages along the path to true and complete union with Ishtra. The First Kiss is the ceremony marking the transition between the White and Ruby Veils. The Second Kiss is a vision of Ishtra's celestial paradise and pavilion. The Third Kiss is a vision of the goddess herself almost entirely veiled in a mist or fog; only her hands and feet are visible. The Fourth Kiss is the so-called Feast of Ishtra, in which the novitiate serves at a banquet attended by the great Sisters of the past, always including Syrsi Aranî as well as Barûthhîn, daughter of Zâirinzil (who is widely regarded in Esmerian circles as a martyr); Ishtra herself is almost entirely visible now, with only her face remaining veiled. The Fifth Kiss unveils the goddess completely, so that the visionary recognizes the goddess' face as

identical to her own; Sister and goddess are one.

There is often an erotic quality to these visions, and satyrs and other creatures of legend inhabit the Ishtran paradise. The Path of the Five Kisses is first attested in the *Life of Syrsi Aranî*, composed in Nîlûlondê soon after Syrsi's death; the Life was ascribed by later tradition to Syrsi's successor, Savyé.

GM Note: *Because houris are a Mentalism-based clajd in Rolemaster, it can be assumed that the visions are internal manifestations of a deeply held faith, and not from any outside divine or evil source. Certainly, the Valar seem unlikely as sources for such erotic visions; neither is Sauron likely to preach love, even ironically or in bad faith.*

PLAYING A SISTER OF ISHTRA

Sisters of Ishtra are not recommended as PCs without a great deal of thought and effort (this is said after considerable playtesting). At low levels they are ineffective in melee, especially outside of a Southron setting, where their religious

nature acts as shield against Haradrim foes unwilling to anger a goddess who is seen as both powerful and active. At higher levels, their seductive skills increase and they become highly disruptive to standard game plots. When even the most committed assassin becomes a Sister's devoted (and besotted) lover, one can assume the threat to the PCs has largely come to an end.

However, as NPCs, Sisters can be effective friends, foes or background flavor. They add an exotic touch to a Harad-based campaign, allowing the GM to insert a *femme fatale* into the intrigue. Alternatively, interaction between a Sister and a female Gondorian PC can be amusing, as the two discover each other's unique tactics for survival in a patriarchal world. Besides, one can only imagine why Queen Berúthiel flew to the south when driven from Gondor; perhaps she was of the faith herself, explaining why she had such a hold on her husband!

DEVELOPING A SISTER OF ISHTRA

MERP Guidelines

Sisters of Ishtra use the Mage Development Point Table, with a prime stat of Intuition. Their Profession Skill Bonuses per level are:

+2 Read Rune, Use Item, Base Spell OB, General skills
+3 Perception

They are Channeling Realm spell users who have access to Open Channeling Spell Lists and have Base Lists of Lore (Bard List), Controlling Songs (Bard List), Item Lore (Bard Base), Spirit Mastery (Open Essence), Essence Perceptions (Open Essence), Illusions (Open Essence), Direct Channeling (Animist List), Spell Ways (Open Essence)

RM Guidelines

Sisters of Ishtra can choose from the following lists: Alluring Ways, Kisses, Houri's Change, Influences, Proselytizing (Priest Base, *Channelling Companion),* Lores (Bard Base), Mind Mastery (Closed Mentalism), Controlling Songs (Bard Base) or Communal Ways (Cleric Base, with *Love's Tale* substituted for *Death's Tale;* this new spell determines the story behind love affairs, break-ups, etc.).

They spend DPs as the Houri class from *Rolemaster Companion IV;* if this book is not available, they can be rolled up as Mystics *(Spell Law)* or Clerics/Priests *(Channelling Companion).*

RMSS Guidelines

Sisters of Ishtra are developed as Mystics with no Restricted skills, no Occupational skills, Everyman skills of Seduction, Diplomacy and Public Speaking.

Their base realm is Mentalism, with Base Lists of Lores (Bard Base), Controlling Songs (Bard Base), Communal Ways (Cleric Base, with *Love's Tale* substituted for *Death's Tale;* this new spell determines the story behind love affairs, breakups, etc.), Mind Control (Mentalist Base, all ranges are 'touch' -if delivered by a kiss the RR is at —30), Mind Attack (Mentalist Base, all ranges are 'touch' -if delivered by a kiss the RR is at —30), Disguise Mastery (Magent Base).

TIMELINE

Second Age

2250 Akhôrahil, lord of Ciryatanórë, rebels against the king of Númenor, declaring himself the Storm King and convincing the Ishtran priests in his realm to pronounce him the son of Ishtra and Vatra. Out of fear they do so, and wherever Akhôrahil's armies go in the next century they set up shrines to the new god.

Third Age

405 Zimra-zadan, renamed Esmer, becomes the principle site for the worship of Ishtra. Influenced by the Tumakveh dynasty's theological innovations concerning Ladnoca and Eru, the priests at Esmer begin carving out new spiritual territory for their goddess, associating her with the creative principle behind the formation of the world itself.

830 Tarannon Falastur creates the province of Harondor south of the Poros. Gondor's limited interest in cultural imperialism means that most local cults are left in peace; however, the temple prostitution associated with the Ishtra cult is forbidden as an abomination. The worship of Ishtra begins to wane among the Haruze.

c. 1050 Akhôrahil returns to Middle-earth. From Ny Chennacatt he builds an army and begins the reconquest of his empire, this time fully in the guise of Arsamshakar, god of sorcery and storms, son of Vatra and Ishtra. This apparent divine resurrection lies behind the drawing power of the Army of the Southern Dragon. Akhôrahil's servants spread the word that their lord brings messages back from the celestial paradise, and that he wishes to inaugurate a thousand-year period of terrestrial peace and prosperity.

1705 The failure of the Court of Ardor to achieve their ends with the Ritual of the Eclipse leads Linsûl the Bard, one of the few surviving members of the Court, to journey away from the Mûmakan, gradually travelling north.

1757 Arriving in Esmer, Linsûl observes the tragic condition of the "priestesses" of Ishtra's cult. Making contact with a minor priestess, Syrsi Aranî, Linsûl teaches her much of the lore of the bards and the skills of seduction.

1763 Syrsi overthrows the male priesthood; her brother, an officer in the palace guard of Esmer, simultaneously engineers a coup, putting the Aranî family in control of the city. The nature of the temple coup remains a mystery for the ages. Legend relates that the male priests were turned into animals and sent to a distant island, Shallaea. The truth may or may not be more prosaic.

1775 Syrsi Aranî becomes the first Sister to achieve the Five Kisses of Ishtra. That same year she names Savyé of Nîlûlondê as her successor and disappears. It is believed that Syrsi was physically taken to Ishtra's paradise, but others believe she came to dwell in Shallaea, having been granted immortality by Ishtra.

c. 1800 Most Ishtran temples in the Raj adopt the new hierarchy, despite misgivings from other cults and the political authorities.

1805 Savyé begins the difficult process of missionary activity in Bellakar. Her technique becomes standard practice in the centuries to come: she finds the temples and shrines of the local goddess of love, wins the loyalty of the priests or priestesses, and declares the local goddess to be a manifestation of Ishtra. Within a year, the priests have generally been replaced by the Sisters. Savyé spreads the notion of the "creative" Ishtra, a manifestation designed to appeal to intellectuals and philosophers, which was first formulated in 5th century Esmer.

1810 King Telumehtar of Gondor captures Umbar and begins reordering Harondor and Harnendor.

1813 Telumehtar meets Savyé, who convinces the king that the Sisters of Ishtra are a force for good in the region. Thus Harondor becomes the only area in which the hierarchy of the Sisters is politically supported from above. The remnants of the Ishtran cult among the Haruze and their cities accept the change with little trouble; most of the priests accept land from the Gondorians and go their own way. The Sisters in Harondor are largely a conservative group, willing to aid the Gondorian authorities. Despite this, most local officials continue to distrust them, not sharing their king's enthusiasm for any organization that appears willing to help the Gondorian cause in the region.

1815 Demelza of Taôch becomes high priestess at Esmer following the death of Savyé.

1816 Akhôrahil attempts to surround Bozisha-Miraz by gaining control of Esmer. To that end, he sends a demand for tribute to the city of the Ruby Goddess on behalf of her son, the living god Arsamshakar. Demelza sends an emissary to Akhôrahil at Fhûl, demanding tribute in turn. After all, she reasoned, a son should support his mother out of filial duty. Trapped by his own false mythology, the humiliated Akhôrahil begins sending a nominal tribute each year to his "mother" Ishtra at Esmer. When Akhôrahil returns north to Nurn, Sauron is singularly unimpressed with the entire incident.

1890 Sauron's spies begin infiltrating Harithilien, successfully keeping ;their movments secret for many decades. These agents often use the Sisters as a cover for their own activities, causing the authorities to begin persecuting the Ishtrans and confiscating temples , and property. The Sisters oppose them, but can do very little due to their fall from favor.

2000 Rise of the Servants of Vatra in Bozisha-Miraz. Both sides in the protracted struggle for power between Ladnoca's and Vatra's cults woo the Sisters, who play both sides against each other. The Ishtrans are accorded a position of power after the rise of the Sun Kings, although they are not entirely trusted. At the same time, they help many priests and followers of Ladnoca to reach safety and shelter. Although no official schism takes place, the Order is polarized into those drawn to sun-worship and those drawn to alliance with the moon. The myth of Ishtra's neutrality is adapted for use during this difficult period, and a version which is to become standard is written down.

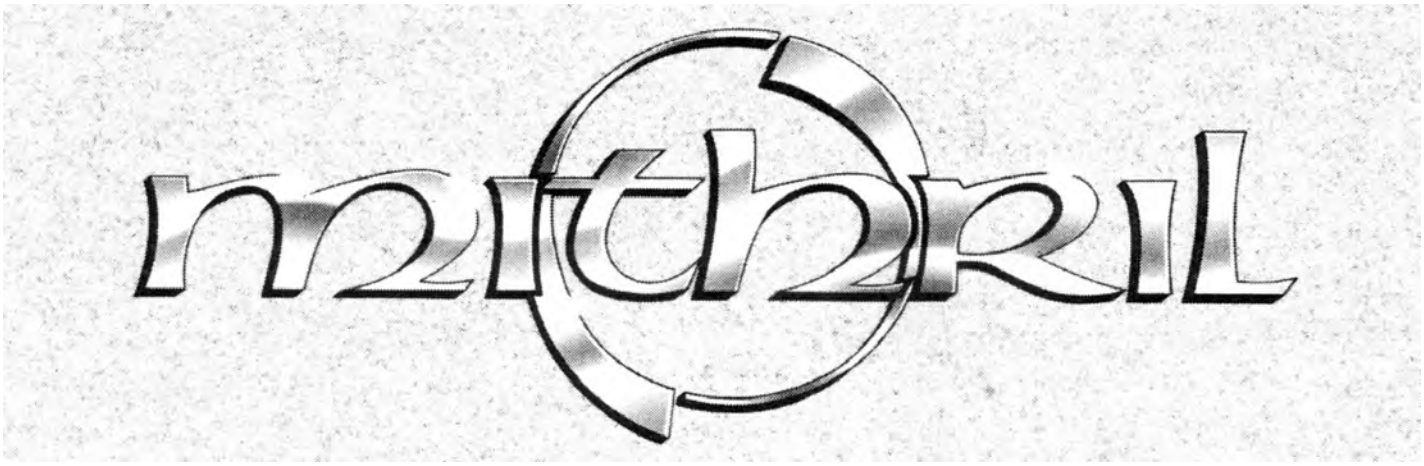
2002-3019 The Sisters in Harondor and Harnendor survive as best they can under the shifting dynasties of the period. At times, Sisters in one city find themselves battling those from another, some serving the Dark Lord and others opposing him. Unlike their counterparts in Bozisha-Miraz, the hierarchy of the Sisters in Harondor falls apart completely.

2194 Pon Ifta is crowned in Bozisha-Dar, the first of the Sun Kings (cf. FarHarad module).

2971 Aragorn (in the guise of Thorongil) encounters a Sister of Ishtra named Géyulla while on a mission in Amrûn. She attempts to seduce him on behalf of the Dark Lord, but fails. Aragorn acquires a healthy dislike for the Ishtran cult.

Fourth Age

5-21 Elessar subdues Near Harad. The recognition granted to the Sisters by Telumehtar is not renewed due to their activities in support of various Haruze dynasties in the centuries leading up to the War of the Ring. The Sisters never recover their influence in Harondor, although their power continues unabated in Esmer and Bozisha-Miraz.



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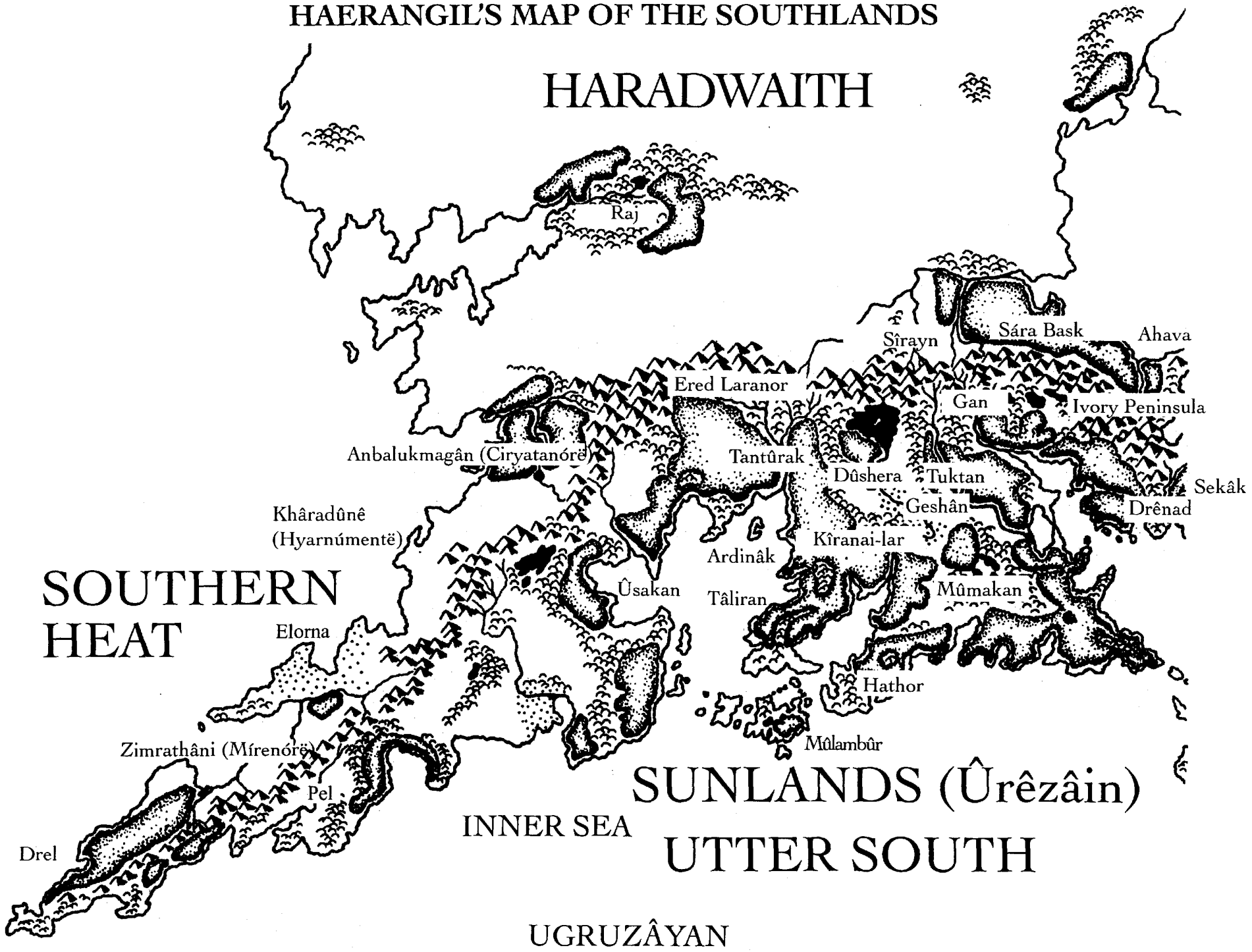

HAERANGIL'S MAP OF THE SOUTHLANDS
HARADWAITH
Raj
Sîrayn
Sára Bask
Ahava
Ered Laranor
Gan
Ivory Peninsula
Anbalukmagân (Ciryatanóre)
Tantûrak
Dûshera
Tuktan
Sekâk
Geshân
Drênad
Khâradûnê
(Hyarnúmentë)
Kîranai-lar
Ardinâk
SOUTHERN
HEAT
Ûsakan
Tâliran
Mûmakan
Elorna
Hathor
Mûlambûr
Zimrathâni (Mírenórë)
Pel
SUNLANDS (Ûrêzâin)
INNER SEA
Drel
UTTER SOUTH
UGRUZÂYAN

60° N

50° N

40° N

30° N

20° N

10° N

0°

10° S

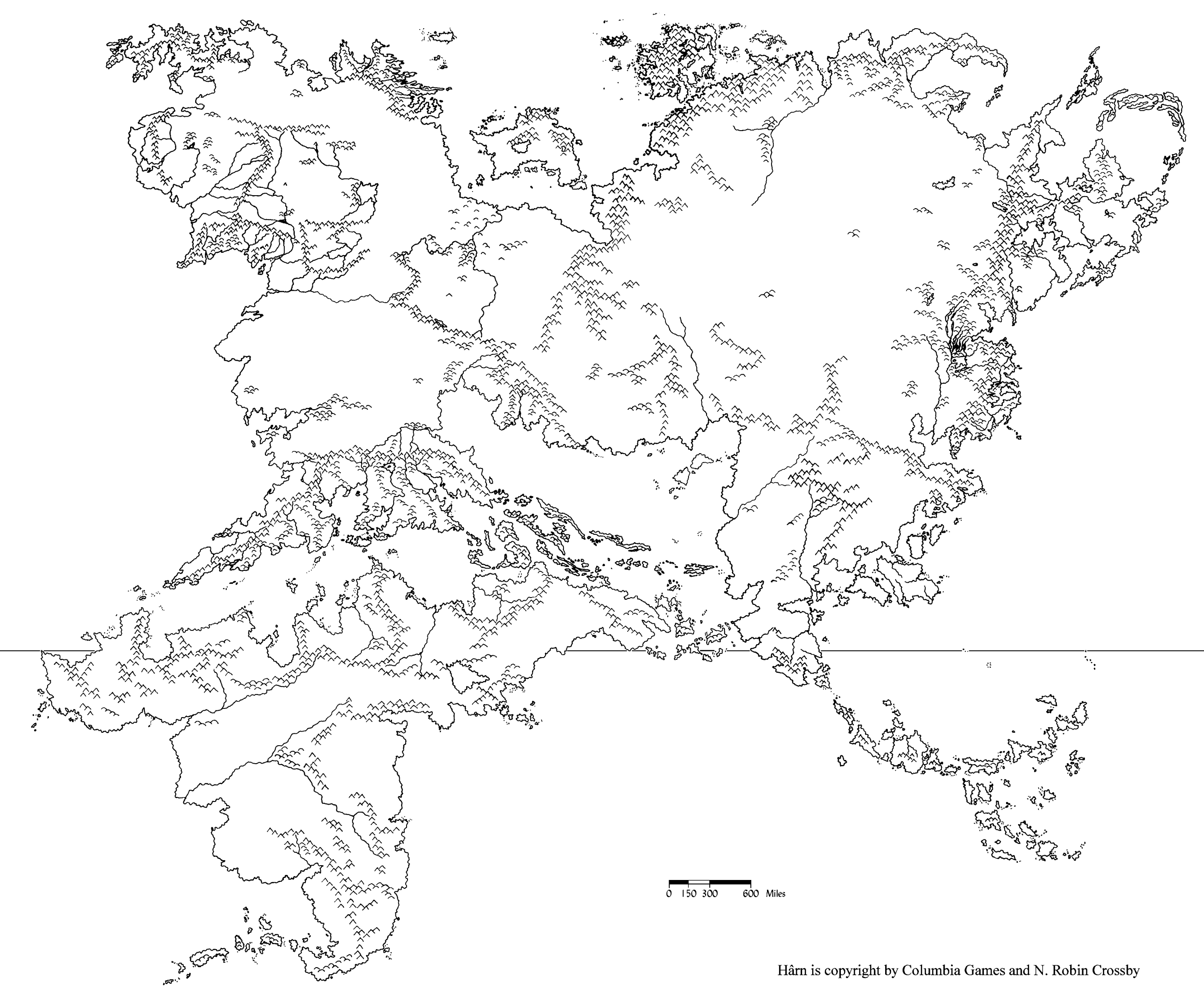
20° S

30° S

Equator

Tundra
Needleleaf
Summergreen
Evergreen hardwood
Prairie and Steppe
Desert and Semidesert
Savanna
Temperate Rainforest
Tropical Rainforest

0 150 300 600 miles



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